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Official Records

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New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 11 and 40 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/57/2 and A/57/2/Corr.1)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): It seems that I am not lucky. As the first speaker on the list this morning, I will be talking to myself and to the handful of colleagues in the General Assembly Hall.

My delegation would like to extend its thanks to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, President of the Security Council for this month, for his presentation of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We also wish to extend our warm thanks to the staff of the Secretariat for the considerable efforts that they have made in preparing this report.

Today, we are discussing the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly under paragraph 1 of Article 15 and paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the United Nations Charter. I would like to mention the great importance attached to the General Assembly's discussion of the report in order to hear the views of Member States on the performance of the Security Council and its follow-up of its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In that context, we would like to state that one of the significant changes to the report was a brief analytical introduction. Resolution 51/193, adopted by the General Assembly in its fifty-first session, aimed, inter alia, at making the report of the Council more analytical. Thus, this report complies with that resolution, as it contains an analytical introduction.

More than 10 months have passed since Syria joined the Security Council, following its election in the General Assembly by an overwhelming majority of Member States. We should like to express once again our most sincere thanks to the States that supported us. Syria brought to the Council many issues and areas of concern that attracted the interest of many representatives of Member States, including the issue of improving the mechanisms by which the Council deals with the various matters of discussion before it.

Today, we see changes in substance and form in the report of the Security Council, thanks to the cooperation of all members of the Council. As far as substance is concerned, the report now contains an introduction that includes a brief analysis of political actions undertaken by the Council — a change that Member States had requested for many years. With regard to form, the report's volume and its number of pages have been reduced. As a result, it is both more useful and more economical.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Here, we should like to express our special thanks to Ambassador Mahbubani and to the Mission of Singapore for their strenuous follow-up efforts during the past period, which produced the desired result. However, we believe that much work remains to be done by the Council to make the report an actual reflection of the actions that the Council has taken, regardless of the extent of their success.

During the period under consideration, the Security Council achieved remarkable progress in making its work more transparent. There was participation by non-Council members, which were able to express their views on the political issues being discussed and on finding solutions to them. The Council held final meetings in which members and non-members frankly evaluated its work. Under the presidency of Syria in June, the Council held a great number of meetings in which it discussed issues related to various regions — whether to the Middle East, Africa, Asia or Europe — or specific issues such as combating international terrorism or promoting the role of the Security Council or of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, at various levels. In addition, a final meeting was held to evaluate the Council's work in terms of the principle of transparency.

One of the first issues presented by Syria — to which the Council responded last January — was the conducting of a monthly briefing on the Middle East. One of these briefings was presided over by Mr. Farouk Al-Shara', Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic, and in others, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and other high-level United Nations officials discussed developments in the Middle East. It has become clear that such briefings represent an advanced step in the way in which the Council deals with one of the most tense regions in the world. They also place on the shoulders of Member States the requisite responsibility to put an end to Israeli practices and Israeli occupation, with a view to finding a comprehensive and just solution to the Middle East problem, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions and on the Madrid terms of reference, as well as on the Arab initiative adopted at the Beirut Summit, held in March.

During the period under consideration, the Council undertook intensive efforts to address the sensitive problems in Africa with a view to settling the disputes and wars on the continent. In that connection, we should like to refer to a number of open Council meetings that included the participation of concerned States — in particular African States — and of Member States in general to restore peace and security to the African continent, which urgently needs the concerted efforts of the international community and its unlimited support to achieve development and to eradicate the root causes of conflict. Syria has left no stone unturned in participating in Council deliberations and in adopting resolutions that reflect the views of concerned States, with a view to finding consensus on positions that would end conflicts and serve lasting peace.

We should like to state that the Council's dispatch of missions to areas of tension and conflict was very important, because it enabled us to gain firsthand knowledge of the situation on the ground. For example, one mission was sent to Eritrea and Ethiopia, another visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a workshop was held on the Mano River Union. A mission will soon visit Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Belgrade.

Also during the past period, the Security Council discussed many substantive matters, including in the areas of peacekeeping operations, the protection of women and children in armed conflict and terrorism. The Council was successful in addressing many of those issues. It made tangible progress, and we are trying our best to improve the Council's work in that direction. Yet we should like to state that, in the period under consideration and the preceding period, the Council could not follow up on the implementation of the resolutions it had adopted. That encouraged certain parties — especially in the conflict areas in Africa and in the Middle East — not to respond to Council resolutions. They have ignored those resolutions. As conflicts become more protracted, the matter becomes more sensitive, especially when they relate to resolutions adopted by the Security Council, under the provisions of the Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. In such situations, the Council has been unable to maintain international peace and security.

We believe that lack of follow-up on the implementation of the Security Council's resolutions will have a negative effect on the Council's role and on the international community's view of the Council. All of us know, for instance, that Israel has rejected, ignored and refused to implement the Council's resolutions — resolutions that should have been

implemented with the Council's insistence. If the resolutions had been implemented during the past few decades, peace and security would have prevailed in the Middle East.

The Council has adopted 29 resolutions regarding Israel, none of which have been implemented. Some members insist on the implementation of certain resolutions, but not of others. We would like to state that all Security Council resolutions and positions should be implemented on an equal footing, with no double standards. We call for complete respect for the Charter's articles, underscoring the obligatory need for implementation of all Security Council resolutions by all States, without exception.

Here we would like to point out the important role played by the Council's 10 elected States and the need to foster its work and input. This is particularly relevant when we take into account the fact that the non-permanent member States represent many views relating to the updating of the Council's mechanisms, thus making its modus operandi more responsive and more transparent in dealing with the political and security challenges affecting today's world.

In the middle of this week, beginning tomorrow, the Security Council will discuss the situation between Iraq and Kuwait. This problem has taken on increasing international dimensions and interest. We have listened to a number of statements indicating that, in spite of the sensitive nature of this matter, the Council has thus far not discussed the question in open meetings, as the international community has expected.

Elected States have so far are not been given a chance to voice their views or express their positions on draft resolutions being circulated in the mass media some days ago. Such media-circulated draft resolutions were the main reference to those 10 elected States of the Council. I would like to emphasize the need to deal with this question within the framework of international law and to resolve the problem peacefully, in particular since Iraq has, on more than one occasion and in more than one official document, stated its readiness to implement the relevant resolutions to allow United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) inspectors and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to return to Iraq in order to carry out their mission without conditions or restrictions.

We believe that beating the drums of war and the issuance of threats does not in any way conform to the United Nations Charter. Nor does it serve the aspirations of the international community, which desires justice and peace.

Once again, we call upon Iraq to implement all Security Council resolutions relating to the Iraqi question.

We have already expressed in the Open-ended Working Group our observations on the issue of equitable representation in the Council and an increase in its membership. During the Group's meeting, we expressed our views in numerous statements, and our delegation participated actively in the Group. Our delegation believes that this Group still constitutes a viable rostrum for deliberations in order to reach consensus on those two sensitive issues.

Although the Working Group achieved somewhat commendable progress in improving the working methods of the Council, it has, regrettably, so far been unable to achieve any noticeable progress in other fields, given the difficulties within the Council. The Syrian delegation, which participated actively in all the previous meetings, will exert all efforts to achieve the desired progress along the line of the positions adopted by the Arab Group and the Non-Aligned Movement countries. And we will continue our work to build on the positive steps taken, and on the views and drafts presented to the Working Group, which has discussed these ideas quite seriously with the aim of achieving more democratization in the Council whether in the area of expanding its membership or in achieving transparency in its working methods.

All proposals and views put forward by delegations on this important topic will be respected and appreciated by our delegation. As a non-permanent Council member, we will do our best to build on the achievements made in the past period. We will demonstrate full cooperation with the other Council members, so as to enable the Council to shoulder its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The international community has been working for 57 years

to strengthen the United Nations and to bring it into line with today's realities. In that context, reform of the Organization is a programme of vital importance, and Security Council reform represents one of the main aspects of its modernization.

Our world has changed a lot, particularly over the past 10 years. That is why is would be naive to believe that the Council — which was created in 1945 as a reflection of the economic, political and demographic interests of the victorious States of the Second World War — I repeat, it would be naive for us to believe that with its present structure and practices, the Council would be in keeping with present circumstances.

The new threats to international peace and security, such as terrorism and the threat to occupy States and change regimes, have ushered us into a new age that requires that decision-making be a collective responsibility rather than serve the interest of a single great Power. The Council has a real need for true leadership based on objectivity, team spirit and unity of purpose, to contribute to establishing a world where peace, understanding, equality and respect will prevail.

The report under consideration, much as it reflects objective realities, also points out real dangers. The Council did not respond to the voices of the Member States calling for its reform and for the modernization of its work so that it can be more representative, legitimate, democratic and effective and can accommodate greater participation in its work. It is clear that what is lacking does not concern submitting proposals, because that is not an impossible matter. What is important is the political will necessary to achieve the modernization I have referred to.

For the past 12 years, the Security Council has devoted much of its time to discussing the situation in my country, Iraq, which is not in keeping with the Charter or with anything relevant to international peace and security. Rather, it is in keeping with the wish and interests of two individual States that practise hegemony, I regret to say, without any consideration for the humanitarian and legal standards enshrined in the Charter or in established rules of international legitimacy.

Despite the fact that the resolutions adopted by the Security Council against my country have been unjust, denying the rights of Iraq and of the Iraqi people, as established in the Charter, Iraq has, nonetheless, implemented all those resolutions. Yet the Security Council remains firm in its position. It continues to discuss the Iraqi case behind closed doors, not only at closed meetings or informal discussions at the United Nations, but also in the capitals of the permanent members of the Council, completely sidelining Iraq and the non-permanent members of the Council from any discussion involving Iraq.

The Council has become a special tribunal on Iraq, acting secretly as judge and witness at the same time. And it has not stopped there. It has also disregarded everything that Iraq has been subjected to in terms of violations of its sovereignty, independence and security as a founding Member of this international Organization, even though the Council has affirmed its respect for all its relevant resolutions adopted since 1990.

Iraq has met all its commitments pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly those related to disarmament. Yet, the American Administration has carried out an aggressive campaign against Iraq, accusing Iraq, in a series of lies bandied about by highly placed authorities of the American Administration, of possessing and developing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and threatening international peace and security, and has issued statements by a number of authorities, including President Bush, threatening to occupy Iraq on the pretext that it is a threat to the United States and to international peace and security.

In the light of my Government's sincere wish to fully implement Security Council resolutions, and in response to the calls of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Arab nations and friends, including the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Government of Iraq has agreed to allow the unconditional return of the inspectors — a step which was widely welcomed by the Secretary-General, the members of the Security Council and the international community.

When the United States realized that that would deny it the opportunity to invade and occupy Iraq, it prevented the inspectors from returning to Iraq and began to discuss a draft resolution preparing the grounds for another war, a resolution which would be difficult to implement and thus pave the way for aggression against Iraq.

A few days ago, the American Senate and the House of Representatives adopted a resolution

authorizing President Bush to use armed force against Iraq, an independent State and a Member State of the United Nations, without referring to the United Nations. Immediately after that, a military build-up began inside and outside the region. The intentions of the American Administration became even more evident when it began to discuss, explicitly and blatantly, military aggression and appointing an American military governor in Iraq.

Is that not a blatant violation of the Charter and the system of international relations that has been forged over the past 50 years? Should we not consider such an American measure a threat to and a blatant violation of international peace and security by a permanent State member of the Security Council — the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security? Does that not undermine the very basis of international relations, in keeping with the Charter? Does it not constitute a monopoly of international legitimacy? I leave it to the Assembly to answer those questions.

The very serious nature of the measures that the American Administration is putting in place in order to invade Iraq makes it necessary for the Security Council to adopt counter-measures to guarantee respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iraq. If the Council disregards such threats, many other States will become the target of occupation aimed at overturning their regimes. The legality of the measures undertaken by the Security Council emanates from the mandate given to the Council by the Member States, which expect the Council to act on their behalf in maintaining international peace and security, as is made clear in paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter.

The United States of America and the United Kingdom seem to be trying — through their relations with Iraq — to establish a precedent for terrorizing other States by adopting measures that violate the Charter. My country places great hope in the collective wisdom of the members of the Security Council and the international community in dealing with this very serious matter. We hope that they will do so with a sense of responsibility and courage and prevent the United States and the United Kingdom from undertaking further acts of aggression against Iraq, threatening its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The tragic development of relations between Iraq and the Security Council over the past 12 years has been determined by two permanent members of the Council — perhaps even by one. This has greatly weakened the credibility of the Council and its capacity to maintain international peace and security and to prevent conflict.

The Council is acting in accordance with the wishes of parties that exercise hegemonic control over its decision-making. The Council is not acting on behalf of the Member States. We blame the Council for its selectivity in dealing with issues. Such selectivity is evident not only in the Council's relationship with Iraq but also in the blatant example of the Council's approach to the Palestinian question. In that respect the Council has adopted a nonchalant position, given the massacres perpetrated daily by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people and the disregard shown for their inalienable rights, especially their right to self-determination.

The Security Council has paid no attention to the tragic situation of the Iraqi people resulting from the continued unjust economic embargo that has led to the death of more than 1.7 million Iraqi citizens — I call the attention of the international community to that figure — most of them from vulnerable groups, including women, children and the elderly. They have died for no other reason than lack of medicine and food.

The United States of America claimed that it wanted to improve the situation of the Iraqi people, and called for the adoption of a resolution in that respect. Resolution 1409 (2002), which was recently adopted, was aimed — so the United States and Britain claimed — at alleviating the suffering of the civilian population of Iraq. Yet the resolution provided for measures that place further obstacles in the way of implementing contracts for the purchase of medicines and food. The new mechanisms require the contracts for obtaining foodstuffs, including rice and flour, and pharmaceuticals, including chronic and heart-disease medicine, to be submitted to disarmament experts from the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency. I do not know what expertise such individuals have in flour, rice and medicine such that they can determine whether we should be able to buy them or not. All the civilian needs of the Iraqi people, such as machinery and equipment for social and economic development, are also submitted to those experts.

The Security Council has neglected to address many of the matters submitted by my Government to the Council that fall within its mandate and its resolutions. The Council has not considered such issues, even though they go to the very heart of its responsibilities under the Charter. The no-fly zones are not legal; they have been imposed by the United States and the United Kingdom without having been provided for in any Security Council resolution. Indeed, they contravene the ceasefire conditions of the notorious resolution 687 (1991), as do the continuous raids by American and British aircraft in those and other zones and the daily violation of Iraqi airspace. Raids, destruction, bombings and killings are taking place on a daily basis before the very eyes of the Security Council, and no one lifts a finger.

Such neglect is not limited to the Security Council, but also extends to the bodies that the Council has established. Even the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, which is operating in the demilitarized zone between the two countries and whose mandate is to record and report any violations, has not informed the Security Council of the violations of that zone committed by American and British planes on a daily basis, although it has admitted that that such violations are taking place. It acknowledges that there are such planes, but says that it does not know and cannot determine their identity. Such planes fly in that zone and even in Iraqi airspace around the clock.

Those actions do, indeed, constitute a violation of Security Council resolutions and blatant aggression against a State Member of the United Nations. They represent a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq as well as of the integrity of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

As for the sanctions, the topic of the age, even though we are fully convinced that they are neither legal nor legitimate, my country regrets the fact that the Security Council does not at least periodically assess the nefarious consequences of these inhuman measures on the civilian population.

No time frame has been established for the sanctions, and Article 50 of the Charter has not been made operative, and therefore some States are adopting unilateral measures to punish States that may not agree with their stance, such as the Sudan, Libya, Iran and others.

The notorious Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1991) continues to work very secretly, not allowing any participation by Iraq in its work, either directly or indirectly, even though the Committee deals only with the basic needs and livelihood of the Iraqi people — food and medicine. The Committee takes its decisions on the basis of the political interests of some States; everyone knows this.

Where is the justice, the transparency and the credibility in the Committee's work? We are still waiting for approval of the lists prepared by the Office of the Iraq Programme, in consultation with the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which are referred to as the "blue lists". They used to be called the "green lists". We are now waiting for the "red lists". They have been greatly delayed because of the objections of the American and British representatives.

In addition to what those two representatives have done in dealing with the memorandum of understanding on oil for food, they have also delayed contracts and priced Iraqi oil retroactively, which has led to a reduction in export rates and consequently to a decline in programme revenues, with more than 1,240 contracts left unimplemented.

The Security Council has not devoted sufficient attention to peace and security, which form the very core of its mandate, in keeping with the Charter and with international law. That is why we say sincerely and explicitly that the Council has failed dismally.

One single member of the Council has made the Palestinian question impossible to resolve, even from the humanitarian point of view. The Palestinian people are struggling to free their land and to recover their rights. If the Council cannot offer them any humanitarian protection, how can the international community have faith that the Security Council will find a political solution to the Palestinian problem in accordance with the Charter and international law?

Iraq's position concerning the reform of the Security Council can be summed up as follows. First, the veto right should be limited and then phased out, because it is not in keeping with the principle of equality among States as embodied in the Charter.

Second, the non-permanent members of the Council have been totally marginalized, and their

presence is often but a formality. They must be allowed to play an effective role, because they represent most of the peoples and the regions of the world, and they must participate in all the negotiations and deliberations of the Council as well as in decision-making.

Third, rules and measures should be adopted that would guarantee transparency and justice as well as respect for the rights of States.

Fourth, the Council's membership should be expanded so as to ensure a democratic representation of the international community.

Fifth, the Council, as an executive political organ, should not take decisions of a legislative nature. This is the mandate of the General Assembly.

Sixth, the International Court of Justice should be the one to interpret the Articles of the Charter, and its mandate should also include monitoring and interpreting the Council's resolutions.

Seventh, the collective international responsibility of the Council as one of the institutions of the United Nations should be affirmed; and the Council should not be used to implement special policies that serve the interests of a single State.

Eighth, States that are not members of the Council should be informed of Council debates on resolutions that pertain to peace and security, and the Council's deliberations be held in the open, without exception, in order to ensure transparency.

Ninth, members of the Council should not vote on any conflict to which they are a party.

Tenth, there should be resort to Chapter VI of the Charter in the process of conflict resolution as well as taking up preventive diplomacy as much as possible and employing all possible peaceful means to resolve conflicts between States.

Finally, I should like to congratulate the representatives of Pakistan, Germany, Spain, Chile and Angola on their countries' election as non-permanent members of the Council as of 1 January 2003. We wish them every success in carrying out their important responsibilities.

Mr. Al-Otaibi (Kuwait) *(spoke in Arabic)*: The General Assembly is addressing two very important items on its agenda: "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", and "Report of the Security Council".

The report on these two items clearly reflects the extensive and commendable work that has been done by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council.

In this context, I should like to express our deep appreciation to Mr. Han Seung-soo, the outgoing President of the General Assembly during the fifty-sixth session and Chairman of the Working Group, and to the Vice-Chairmen, who guided the high-level discussions within the Group.

The Group's deliberations have shown that there is an urgent need to restructure the Council and to ensure greater transparency in its procedures and working methods. The studies and working documents submitted by various States, organizations and regional groups, as well as by the President's Office, all agree that there is a need to reform the Council to make it more interactive and more effective in maintaining international peace and security and to enable it better to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Nonetheless, despite the agreement in principle among Members on the required reform following that debate, the Working Group was unable to reach consensus on the increase in membership or on the Council's working methods. I regret to note that the debate has become repetitious over the past few years. We are constantly reiterating the same issues, as if we were caught up in a vicious cycle. We are therefore required to set a deadline for agreement on the necessary reform of that important organ.

Despite all this, the Group has achieved progress on the Security Council's working methods. There is now almost unanimous agreement on the measures and proposals to be adopted to amend the Council's rules of procedure. On its own initiative, the Council has implemented changes in its methods and procedures and we note that improvement in the form of the report can be used as a basis for further reform in the future.

In this context, I would draw attention to the section on page 5 of the report concerning developments in Iraq's implementation of the Council's resolutions. This section appears under the heading

"Iraq", whereas the agenda item is entitled "The situation between Iraq and Kuwait".

Kuwait has already had an opportunity to express its views on the Council expansion, both on its own behalf and as a member of the groups to which it belongs. Today's debate offers us yet another chance to reaffirm our position, as follows.

First, Kuwait supports an increase in the Council membership so long as the new number is not so unwieldy as to diminish the Council's effectiveness and proficiency in discussions on threats to international peace and security.

Secondly, the number of members should be in accordance with the two principles of equal sovereignty among Member States and equitable geographical representation.

Thirdly, if an increase in the number of permanent seats should be agreed, it should be limited and filled by Member States that, in their relations with the United Nations, have demonstrated a capacity to assume essential responsibilities and to ensure that the principles and purposes of the Charter are followed in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. These new members must be elected by the General Assembly in accordance with procedures to be agreed on.

Fourthly, with respect to the reform of the Security Council's working methods and its relations with other United Nations bodies, the General Assembly in particular, we support all proposals aimed at conferring greater transparency and clarity on the Council's work and at facilitating communications with United Nations Members. In this context, we stress the need to implement reform of the Security Council's decision-making practices and the proposals agreed by the Working Group, without awaiting consensus on other matters, such as the increase in membership and composition.

Fifthly, Kuwait agrees with the proposals on the election of non-permanent members, in accordance with Article 23 of the Charter, because they would allow small States, of which we are one, to become members and to contribute to the Council's work.

Sixthly, with respect to the veto and the complexity and sensitive nature of this matter, we note that the Group's discussion reflects a near consensus on the need to establish criteria vis-à-vis the use of the veto. We hope that the proposals made on this issue will allow us to achieve a consensus supported by all Members.

In conclusion, we should like to see the Group's discussions reach a consensus that will reinforce the Security Council's effectiveness and performance in the maintenance of international peace and security and in facing the challenges of the new millennium.

Mr. Kirn (Slovenia): Allow me to express my Government's deepest condolences to the Government of Indonesia and to the families of the demised over the tragic loss of innocent lives in last Saturday's barbaric act of violence on the island of Bali. We are still deeply shocked by this barbaric attack, which deserves our strongest condemnation.

I would like to begin by thanking the Security Council, the Secretariat and especially Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore and his delegation for their tireless efforts in the preparation of a comprehensive report on the work of the Security Council last year.

We have all noticed that this year's report is more concise and analytical than previous reports. It is greatly reduced and more focused, and makes it much easier to read about and understand the work of the Council in the period covered. We especially welcome the analytical approach taken in the introduction.

It has indeed been a significant and extraordinary year for the Security Council, as its workload has been much greater than ever before, not just in the number of meetings, but also from the substantive point of view. We welcome the fact that more and more meetings of the Security Council are open, thus giving all the States Members of the United Nations the possibility to follow closely and to take part in the discussion of important issues under consideration by the Council. We welcome the transparent approach of the report in presenting the resolutions, statements and other documents of the Council. However, we wish to stress our conviction that much more should be done in the field of implementation of the resolutions. The document itself is indeed of no great importance if they are not implemented. It is the Charter of the United Nations that provides for the clear obligation of States to carry out the Council's decisions.

Let me touch upon a couple of issues that my country believes have been of the most significant importance. First, the quick and decisive action of the

Security Council following the events of 11 September 2001 has shown us clearly that the Council is capable of a making a quick and appropriate response. The establishment of the Committee pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and its work are the right, timely and broad response of not just the Council, but, I dare say, the international community as a whole to the threat of international terrorism. In this connection, we would also like to recognize the significance of the work of the Council regarding the question of Afghanistan, where our continued focus and involvement are needed, in particular in stabilizing the peace and in a post-conflict rehabilitation of the whole of Afghan society.

The area that is of particular interest to my country is South-East Europe. Much progress has been achieved in recent years and we are glad to note that less and less of the work of the Security Council is being devoted to the problems in that area. This is good for the region and good for the United Nations as a whole. It is beyond any doubt that tangible results have been achieved in South-East Europe, also due to United Nations involvement. The results achieved are strengthening the perspective and responsibility of the countries of the region, which makes overall stabilization efforts more sustainable.

This is a positive development in the region and is rightly reflected in a reduced United Nations presence. International presence, however, is still needed in South-Eastern Europe. This applies to Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the European Union is taking over from 1 January 2003, and in Kosovo, where continued United Nations presence is still needed. However, we are glad to note that the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka is about to be concluded, which reflects a greater responsibility on the part of the parties concerned to reach an agreement on Prevlaka issues.

We welcome the fact that in our discussions on the report of the Security Council due attention has been given to the Council's working methods and the question of transparency. Among the most important achievements are the meetings of the Council with the troop-contributing countries, which enable them to participate in the Council's work. We are also glad to note that the Council has improved its transparency by holding more open sessions. We commend the briefings held by the President of the Council for non-member States, and the creation of a web site that is accessible to all Members. We therefore support a unified policy of transparency for the benefit of the entire membership of the United Nations. We also welcome the more frequent visits by members of the Council to areas under consideration and believe that such missions could or should be used as a tool of preventive diplomacy and thus assist us in turning from a culture of reaction to one of prevention.

We also would like to stress the importance of the Council taking up matters that may, at first glance, not seem to be part of its domain, such as the issue of small arms, the protection of civilians and especially children in armed conflicts, the question of women. In these matters it has to cooperate closely with other bodies of the United Nations. However, this must not be done to the detriment of the responsibility and involvement of other organs of the United Nations.

Let me now briefly touch upon the question of the reform of the Security Council. I do not want to sound pessimistic, but I must be realistic. Since the establishment of the United Nations and its main bodies, the world has changed substantially and dramatically. All of the world's structures, especially in the political, social and economic areas, are very different from those that existed before. If the Council wants to achieve its primary goal, it must be representative, reflecting the membership of the Organization and the world community. At present, that is not the case. I believe that we all agree on the need to adjust our Organization, particularly the Security Council, so as to reflect the realities of a globalized international community. The Security Council does not reflect the reality of today's world. Consequently, it should come as no surprise when problems of the authority, legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council are raised. We need to acknowledge and face the challenge of the new realities, and this should include our common reflection on the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

There were great expectations for the Open-ended Working Group when it was first established. However, after nine years of deliberations, it is time to reach a concrete conclusion and try to forge a basic consensus in order to pave the way forward. We have to admit that progress has been made in the area of improved working methods and the transparency of the Council, and much of this has been realized in practice. However, one of the basic questions remains. How will this progress and the proposed improvements be

reflected in the rules of procedure of the Security Council, which are still provisional? I do not intend to repeat Slovenia's position with regard to the question of the reforms, for it is well known and has been expressed during the sessions of the Working Group. We would, in this regard, like to encourage you, Madam, to take a very active approach in the Open-ended Working Group.

In conclusion, allow me to congratulate the delegations of Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain for their recent election as the new non-permanent members of the Security Council.

Ms. Fogh (Sweden): Let me start by joining other speakers in this debate in expressing our condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia. It was a hideous act of terrorism that was committed in Bali this past weekend. Among the many dead and injured were Swedish nationals and our thoughts are with the many injured and affected family members.

The focus is now on the Security Council. We are again being reminded of the enormous responsibility of the Council to uphold peace and security. To safeguard this important role, a reform is needed to further strengthen the Council.

A modern United Nations requires a Security Council that mirrors the realities of today's international relations. The world is changing and so is the United Nations with its growing membership. This must be reflected in the composition of the Council. All of the 191 Member States must perceive it as being truly representative. The credibility and legitimacy of the Council are at stake. Therefore, we need to intensify our efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform.

As Members are aware, Sweden has taken an active role in the efforts to achieve a far-reaching reform of the Security Council. We remain committed to this aim and regard it as one of the most important tasks facing the United Nations membership as it works to implement the recommendations in the Millennium Declaration. Indeed, it is a complex issue, but a crucial one for the continued relevance of the Council if it is to achieve concrete results. In order to emphasize the legitimacy of the Security Council, the need for reform is urgent. This would further strengthen the Organization in its most vital role as the guarantor for protecting international peace and security. Therefore, all Member States must now act in a responsible manner and show flexibility.

All efforts should be made to strengthen the Council's ability to work effectively, negotiate in good faith and reach decisions. Necessary actions must not be hindered or blocked by a veto or threat thereof.

As stated on earlier occasions, Sweden favours an enlargement of the Council to make room for an increased representation of Member States, not least the developing countries. We also believe that it is of utmost importance that a reform is met by the broadest possible support — ideally by consensus. To achieve this, Sweden would support a reform process in stages. A first step would be an enlargement limited to non-permanent members. At a later stage, Sweden would not exclude an increase in permanent members.

The reform issue has been discussed for many years, with little success. However, Sweden would like yet again to state its commitment to moving the reform process forward. We will continue to work constructively in the Open-ended Working Group with the primary aim of facilitating an early decision on enlargement. Progress on this important issue is long overdue. We hope that all Member States will join the efforts to create a modern United Nations.

May I take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General for his report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387). Sweden welcomes the views presented in the section entitled "Stalled process of Security Council reform". Sweden fully agrees with the linkage between the Council's credibility and international peace and security. Consequently, it is in everyone's interest to make this important reform a priority.

At this point let me also welcome the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/57/2 and Corr.1). I, like others in this debate, would like to commend the members of the Security Council responsible for the initiative of the new and more user-friendly format of the report, with the analytical summary and the substantially decreased number of pages. It is a good example of modernizing United Nations documents.

Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia): This meeting of the General Assembly has been convened in the sombre context of the heinous act of terrorism that took place

in Bali last weekend. The Government of Indonesia has strongly condemned the bombing, which claimed scores of victims, both Indonesians and foreign nationals. We wish to reiterate the condolences and deep sympathy of the Government of Indonesia to the families of the bereaved. The authorities are doing their utmost to investigate that brutal and inhuman act of violence and to bring its perpetrators to justice. We reaffirm Indonesia's commitment to work with the rest of the international community to overcome terrorism, which poses a threat to global security. My delegation therefore gratefully acknowledges the sentiments of sympathy that various delegations have expressed to our Government and our people during this debate.

It is with appreciation that my delegation has welcomed the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/57/2 and Corr.1). We also welcome last session's report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council (A/56/47).

Following the decision of the Council in May 2002, my delegation has noted the changes in the format of the report of the Security Council, which were intended to provide the General Assembly with a more timely and informative document. We agree that the report before us, which covers the period from 16 June 2001 to 31 July 2002, is more concise and informative.

We are gratified that in its quest for increased transparency, the Security Council continued to review its working methods during that period. In that connection, we applaud the increased openness that the wrap-up sessions have engendered, particularly with the participation of non-Council members in February, May and June. We hope that this trend will continue.

Unfortunately, while the current report of the Council opens with an analytical segment, we had hoped for a more substantive, rather than a historical, recounting of the events as they happened in the Council during the year. We had expected the kind of political analysis that would not only tell us what we do not already know but also go below the surface to point out trends, rationales and justifications in the work of the Council. The eight pages that are dedicated to the analytical summary in the current report have not met that expectation, and we hope that this will be improved in the future.

Needless to say, the way in which the Council reports is no less important than its reform and reconstitution. On this issue, I wish to point out that in the segment of the analytical summary concerning the working methods of the Council, reference is made to the increase in the number of meetings that were held in public during the year, as well as to the briefings to non-members by Presidents of the Council. My delegation welcomes that trend and commends members of the Council for making it possible. We look forward to the momentum being sustained. Its continuance is a step forward and represents progress towards greater openness in the Council's deliberations, which has been one of the concerns of the majority of Member States. It is, however, important that efforts be made to ensure that the views expressed by non-members be considered in the drafting of resolutions and of presidential statements.

One question may be asked at this point: why do non-members join in open meetings of the Council? If one may venture an answer, it is not because they want to have their statements entered in the record books. When non-members go there to offer their views on issues of peace and security, it is often because they want those views taken into consideration by Council members, who are in a position to convert them into policy.

However, that may not be the practice of the meetings of the Security Council, particularly considering that in the structure of its work, an open meeting invariably comes after informal consultations — usually a series of informal consultations — at which a draft resolution or a presidential statement may have been prepared for adoption. Hence, the views of non-members of the Security Council are not properly reflected in Council decisions.

We deem it advisable that non-members of the Security Council be given the opportunity to speak prior to the informal consultations on a particular subject to allow them to express their views, followed by the members of the Council, who will speak in the concluding discussion, since they will have engaged in informal consultations on the issue. That kind of arrangement is realistic in another regard: the statements of Council members would then logically

and immediately be followed by the adoption of the resolution or presidential statement.

The further strengthening of the Council's dynamic interaction with the main organ of the United Nations, the General Assembly, has emerged as one of the important questions in the context of the overall reform of the Organization. The Council's reporting on its work to the Assembly, despite its importance, does not suffice; rather, more substantive relations have become imperative. In that context, we recall several items that were deliberated on and decided by the Security Council during the period of this report, including issues such as HIV/AIDS. The work of the Council in dealing with many of those problems should be structured in such a way as to maximize the work and the role of the Assembly on the issues, as mandated by the Charter.

I would now like to turn to the broader subject of Security Council reform. Seven years after the General Assembly first established the Open-ended Working Group on this issue, the Millennium Declaration, in 2000, called on us to intensify our efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. That instruction was arrived at in recognition of the reality that, despite prolonged deliberations in the Working Group, we have moved no closer to an agreement on any of the substantive issues. Those unresolved questions will have to be addressed in order to enhance the Council's credibility and moral authority. As the Secretary-General has rightly remarked in his report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387), the reform of the United Nations would be incomplete without reform of the Security Council.

Last June, the Working Group concluded its work for the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, having decided to recommend consideration of the agenda item at this session and that to recommend the Working Group should continue with its work.

As I have indicated, Indonesia acknowledges the provisional agreement reached on a number of issues concerning the working methods of the Council. We are, however, disappointed at the failure to narrow the substantial differences on other issues.

In the view of Indonesia, the time has come for us to make progress. We hope that the objective — which is to reform the Council comprehensively so as to make it into an organ that is transparent, democratic, representative and effective in the maintenance of international peace and security — will continue to guide our work. If we put that objective before narrower national or group interests, it will increase the possibility that we will reach speedier agreement on the substantive questions.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express its sincere congratulations to Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for 2003 and 2004. We are convinced that they will make concrete contributions to the work of the Council.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): First of all, I should like to express the deep sympathy and condolences of the Government and the people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Government and the people of Indonesia and to the Governments and the peoples of other countries that lost citizens in the recent bomb blast in Bali. We condemn that terrorist attack in the strongest terms, and we hope that the perpetrators will be brought to trial.

It has been nearly 10 years since the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform was created, and, as another year passes without a solution, we must say that many of us are getting a bit frustrated, impatient and weary. It could even be argued that we have reached an impasse — a point at which we are questioning whether a further exercise devoted to tackling this very difficult and convoluted issue is warranted. However, in the light of old and new threats to international peace and security, the significant role of the Security Council and the need to reform the Council so that it reflects today's global realities have never been more relevant. Hence, we must do everything we can to find an acceptable solution to the crucial question of reform.

The Working Group was created to examine key questions related to the reorganization of this important organ of the United Nations. The issues concerning the Security Council's working methods, its decision-making processes and the expansion of its membership are those to which most Member States have paid the greatest attention. Making the Council more effective by making it more representative, more transparent and more democratic is, and always has been, the primary aim of this entire exercise.

As is well known, the position of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on the question of

expanding the membership of the Council is similar to that of the majority of Member States. We favour increasing both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of membership. Furthermore, in line with the positions and the repeated appeals of other Non-Aligned Movement countries, the Lao People's Democratic Republic stresses that, in order to be effective, any Council reform should also include measures to make the Council more transparent in its working methods, especially in its decision-making process. We believe that such transparency would not only boost the confidence of Member States but would also allow all of us to better understand the merits of the Council's decisions and to fully support them.

Finally, in this new age, most of us appear to be in agreement that the veto power of selected members of the Security Council is anachronistic, anti-democratic and discriminatory; yet we continue to witness the existence of that power today. Thus, in our effort to reform and to reorganize the Council, we must make the curtailment and eventual abolition of the right of veto a priority. Fully cognizant of the sensitivity and complexity of this issue, however, we should like to say that, in the spirit of compromise, a solution that is acceptable to all should be found.

Numerous changes have occurred since the inception of the United Nations in 1945. It is regrettable that the Security Council has not adapted to those changes fast enough. Many wars and conflicts are raging across our planet, and we cannot afford to hope that a Council characterized as unrepresentative and not transparent will be effective in maintaining international peace and security. Therefore, we should patiently pursue our efforts to reform the Council, the body charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, in order to make it more credible and more legitimate.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the GUUAM participating States, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and my country, Ukraine.

At the outset, I should like to join my colleagues in conveying our deepest and most heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the malicious and barbaric terrorist act carried out in Bali on 12 October 2002, and to the people and Government of the Republic of Indonesia for the tragic losses that it caused. This shocking event has, once again, underlined the need for consolidation in the efforts of the entire international community in its fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Let me express our gratitude to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, of Cameroon, for presenting the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly. I trust the Assembly will agree that the annual report and its analytical innovations, together with the document prepared by the Secretariat on procedural developments in the Council in the year 2001 (S/2002/603), answered a number of important questions and raised new ones worth thinking about. Indeed, despite the routine practice of slinging arrows at the Council, we acknowledge the appearance of positive and encouraging tendencies in strengthening the Council's international role and improving its working methods.

The statistics show a significant increase in the intensity of the Council's activities last year. The body has been gradually expanding and diversifying its agenda, being deeply involved in a wide range of issues, from the fight against terrorism, to conflict prevention and peace-building, to the protection of civilians and United Nations personnel in conflicts, and so forth.

The Council tried to keep on the consensus track. Despite disappointments and setbacks, the unity approach prevailed, testifying to the willingness of the Council member States to respond adequately to global security demands.

The Council effectively continued applying creative innovations — so to say — in its work, building on the trend towards greater transparency and better working methods. Although there have been only six meetings of the Working Group on procedures and working methods, the final outcome deserves our support and encouragement.

Here we cannot but mention an increase in the total of open meetings, more active dialogue with other United Nations bodies and Member States, and a wider use of the latest information technologies that have helped to speed up the delivery of information to various audiences in the United Nations. This is especially important in view of the close link between accountability and transparency of the Council. United Nations Member States have had more opportunities to participate in the deliberations of the Council and have had a greater chance to influence some of its decisions.

Visible results have been achieved in improving the consultation mechanisms between the troop-contributing countries, the Council and the Secretariat. It is our deep conviction that this triangular cooperation, based on partnership and respect, is an indispensable element for conducting peacekeeping operations in the most effective manner.

It is worth mentioning that much of what has been achieved by the Council can be attributed to the perseverance and innovative thinking of non-permanent members, who, like fresh blood, enter the body with new ideas, new thoughts, new energy and the desire to contribute significantly to the Council's work.

Thus, our key message is clear: the GUUAM participating States (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova) support the ideology and practice of change, as demonstrated by the Council, and we believe that its improved performance in the international arena will further stimulate the overall reform of the world Organization, inspired and promoted by Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The period under review was marked by a wide range of dramatic events. To name just a few, the 11 September terrorist attacks against the United States, the challenge of bringing stability to Afghanistan, the security problems in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the lack of progress in the settlement of conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, the increasing and persistent violence in the Middle East, instability in Africa and the situation in Timor-Leste in its move to independence. And, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Security Council appeared to be much more consolidated and effective in dealing with these important issues.

Among its major achievements, I would like first of all to mention the counter-terrorism efforts of the Council. The response to the 11 September attacks is, in our view, an example of how strong and efficient the Council's action can be if the body is united and resolute. The GUUAM participating States are confident that the Security Council should further play a central role in our common struggle against terrorism. In this context, the role of the Counter-Terrorism Committee cannot be overestimated.

During the reporting period, real progress was made by the Security Council in bringing peace to Afghanistan, in ensuring a smooth transition of Timor-Leste to independence, in strengthening stability in the Balkans and in introducing new approaches to African conflicts.

With regard to Afghanistan, we consider it highly important that the Council continues to closely follow developments on the ground. The current situation in the country requires a new, comprehensive strategy of practical support, aimed at improving the security conditions and facilitating the reconstruction processes.

With regard to the Balkans, we wish to endorse the Council's approach in encouraging more active involvement of the European actors in the stabilization processes in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the fragile security situation in the region, and a wide range of unsettled problems, demand the active involvement and close attention of the United Nations and, specifically, the Security Council.

We note with satisfaction that the Council succeeded in making a major shift in its overall policy towards Africa. The establishment of the ad hoc working group on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa is a landmark step, and we count on the productive work of the group, in close cooperation with other United Nations bodies and regional and subregional organizations.

We welcome positive developments in Africa, including elections in Sierra Leone, the delimitation decision by the Boundary Commission on Ethiopia and Eritrea, the signing of an agreement between UNITA and the Government of Angola and agreements between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda and Uganda.

At the same time, against this optimistic background, we would like to express concern over some other issues. In particular, GUUAM is most disappointed with the lack of progress in the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia. In December of last year, some hope emerged after the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General on Georgia, and later the Security Council, endorsed the document on the basic principles for the distribution of competencies between Tbilisi and Sukhumi. However, for almost a year, the Abkhaz side has continued to brazenly refuse to accept the paper, despite the fact that the Council twice urged it to do so in its resolutions 1393 (2001) and 1427 (2002).

In general, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the problem of so-called frozen conflicts, which were left as unhealed wounds in the newly independent States that emerged in the territory of the former Soviet Union. The international community cannot turn a blind eye to the lack of progress in the settlement of conflicts in Abkhazia; Georgia; Nagorno Karabakh; Azerbaijan; or Trans-Dniester, Republic of Moldova, which have been destabilizing the situation in the whole region for a decade.

Regarding the Middle East, having adopted historic resolution 1397 (2001), which affirmed the vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders, the Council established a clear political perspective for achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. In its subsequent resolutions on the issue, namely 1402 (2002), 1403 (2002), 1405 (2002) and, most recently, 1435 (2002), the Council clearly spelled out its demands for the immediate steps to be taken by the parties to move towards that goal. It is really unfortunate that those resolutions were followed on the ground with intensifying violence and terror, further complicating the work of the Security Council.

Regarding the Iraqi problem, the adoption of the new mechanism for processing civilian exports to Iraq in resolution 1409 (2002) was widely recognized as a positive step to improve the flow of goods, while maintaining necessary controls on dual-use and other military-related items. However, that achievement was also shadowed by a wide range of negative developments. In that context, we wish to reiterate our strong belief that all relevant Security Council resolutions should be implemented in full.

Our countries are also relying on the ability of the United Nations to peacefully resolve the Iraqi problem, which has already become one of the most crucial challenges before the Council.

Finally, regarding the issue of sanctions, though the Working Group on sanctions was originally scheduled to report its findings to the Council by November 2002, unfortunately, it still has not been able to reach final consensus.

We wish to encourage the Security Council to make additional efforts to achieve a compromise solution or to find other ways of ensuring that a comprehensive outcome of the deliberations within the Working Group on sanctions do not remain hostage to a few, albeit important, issues.

The GUUAM participating States have always attached special importance to the Charter powers of the Security Council and have consistently taken a firm stand on enhancing its authority as a nucleus of the global security system. Our countries are guided by the strong determination to contribute to preserving the key role of the Council in that area and to enhancing its legitimacy and effectiveness.

When evaluating Council activities of recent years from a broad perspective, we may find many reasons to characterize them as being the beginning of a new chapter in the history of this body. We hope that that chapter will be marked by greater credibility, openness and responsiveness of the Council to the expectations of the Member States.

Our delegation believes that important innovations that have appeared in the Council's work during the last few years will finally become normal practice. Further expansion of dialogue between the Council and regional and subregional organizations is also a priority task.

Our delegation encourages the Council to continue the practice of sending special missions to conflict regions, which provides an opportunity to assess directly the developments on the ground. In our view, sending assessment expert groups of the Counter-Terrorism Committee should be also considered. In general, the ability of United Nations peacekeeping missions to identify and counter terrorist threats, as recommended by the United Nations Policy Working Group, should be enhanced in every way. We also fully support the view that the Council should meet periodically for a strategic review of its work.

Finally, let me reiterate that there is growing recognition, including within the Security Council, that overall reforms are indeed indispensable if the Council wants to respond to the demands of our times.

I would like to conclude by offering our congratulations to Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their recent election to the Security Council for 2003 and 2004. Our delegations are looking forward to close and productive cooperation with the newly elected members of the Council and wish them every success in discharging their very important responsibilities.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Let me first express my thanks to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon for having introduced the annual report on the work of the Security Council and to the Secretariat for its preparation of the report.

Submission by the Security Council of an annual report on its work to the General Assembly is a good practice that serves to increase contact and collaboration between the General Assembly and the Security Council and to consider recommendations for improving its work on the basis of an analysis of the work of the Council.

The report of the Council presented at this session shows some improvement in its work, compared with previous years, but it still does not meet the expectations of the Member States.

As we review the Security Council's work of the past year, we find that the majority of issues were discussed within the informal format and that its open meetings were held only to adopt resolutions already agreed upon behind closed doors. That reality presents serious problems to Member States, given the distinctive characteristics of the Security Council and the fact that the most important issues regarding peace and security are dealt with by only a few countries.

In order for the Security Council to fulfil its mission properly, it should carry out its obligations to ensure international peace and security in good faith, as enshrined in the Charter. Above all, the Council should show transparency in all its deliberations and should make sure that no resolution is adopted for the political objectives of a specific country.

The Security Council should discuss all issues in open meetings on a just and fair basis, confine informal consultations to procedural matters only and, when it holds informal consultations, it should invite the parties concerned to those consultations so that they can fully present their views.

In particular, when the Security Council adopts resolutions on sanctions or the use of force, it should make it a rule to submit to the General Assembly special reports with the background and content of the resolutions at the earliest date possible, in conformity with the relevant Article of the Charter.

The Security Council should also take steps to prevent individual Member States from using or threatening to use force against other Member States without reference to an explicit United Nations resolution or by invoking coercive power. The Security Council should deal with the challenges to peace and security in a just and determined way, keeping abreast of the requirements of the reality.

There is no legal ground for the presence of the so-called United Nations Command on the Korean peninsula, given either the process of adoption of the relevant Security Council resolution or the relationship between the United Nations and the so-called United Nations Command. The United Nations does not exercise any power politically, militarily or financially over the so-called United Nations Command in Korea, which does not really exist for a United Nations ideal, but rather for the interests of a country. Such forces cannot be called a United Nations force.

My delegation underlines its expectation that the Security Council will, in conformity with the demands and aspirations of the new century for genuine peace and security, pay due attention to redressing the abnormal situation in which the name and flag of the United Nations have been abused for more than 50 years.

If the Security Council is to improve and strengthen its work in accordance with the requirements of the current reality, it should be decisively reformed. A prerequisite for the desired reform of the Security Council is that every Member State must have a clear position on the purposes and principles of the reform.

The core issue of Security Council reform is to make the work of the Security Council more just and democratic. The fair and democratic nature of the Council can be ensured only when representation of the developing countries is increased. In Council reform, priority should be given to properly addressing the implicit denial of the voices of developing countries.

Important consideration should also be given to issues at closed meetings, the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly and regular review of the work of the Council.

All reform matters of the Council should be decided by consensus through the full participation of and negotiation by all Member States. Pressure and arbitrariness should not in any way be permitted. If it is difficult to agree on all issues at once, then issues

easily agreed could be discussed first. Security Council reform should be part of the general reform work of the United Nations and should be discussed accordingly in combination with revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

The Council will be able to discharge its mission of ensuring world peace and security, settling disputes — large or small — in a fair manner, and preventing the arbitrariness of the strong in oppressing the weak by force when it is made democratic, in accordance with the aspirations of the majority of the Member States and present realities.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): I wish first to extend our sincere condolences to the Government of Indonesia, as well as to all the bereaved families who suffer greatly because of the senseless and dastardly act of terrorism in Bali.

The joint debate on agenda item 11 and agenda item 40 gives us an opportunity to review the Council's track record and to clarify our thinking on that important organ of the United Nations.

Please allow me to begin by expressing our delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, President of the Security Council for the month of October, for his introduction of the Council's annual report to the Assembly. I also wish to pay tribute to the work done by his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo, and Ambassador Thorsteinn Ingolfsson of Iceland and Ambassador Patricia Durrant, Vice-Chairpersons of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform, for their tireless efforts on this very important issue.

Myanmar, as a strong advocate of multilateralism, takes special interest in the report of the Council. Submitted under Article 24 of the Charter, that report continues to serve as a vital link between the two main bodies — the General Assembly, where 191 sovereign States are represented, and the Security Council, five permanent and ten non-permanent members, entrusted by Member States with the crucial responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Last year, my delegation together with many others, pointed out that to be of greater value, the Council's report should provide a timely, detailed, complete and analytical account of its work. We are happy to see the improved format of this year's report, which provides us with an analytical account of the Council's work in its introductory part. For that, I wish to express our appreciation to Ambassador Mahbubani and his team for their valuable contribution. I would like to urge the Council to build upon that improved format, and I hope that in future, the analytical part of the report will be strengthened.

We note with satisfaction that the Council has continued the measures to lend greater transparency to its work, particularly the periodic wrap-up sessions. We also appreciate that many more meetings were held in public. The informal briefings on the work of the Council by several monthly Presidents to non-members not only increased transparency but also imparted a sense of inclusiveness. We particularly appreciate the decision by the Council to hold an open meeting to discuss the report before its submission to the General Assembly.

We would greatly welcome more open meetings of the Council. Here we should remind ourselves that open meetings of the Council used to be the rule rather than the exception it is today. We Members of the United Nations have conferred upon the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We have also agreed to abide by and to carry out the decisions of the Council. Therefore, it is only fitting that the views of the general membership be taken into considerations on important issues that affect us all. Such a course of action will also contribute to the successful implementation of Council decisions. The successful implementation of Council decisions clearly needs the full and wholehearted support of all Members of the United Nations.

Concerning the substantive side of the report, it can be easily seen that the work of the Security Council was greatly affected by the events of 11 September. The Council assumed new major responsibilities with the adoption of its resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in the wake of 11 September. By acting decisively and unanimously, the Council has demonstrated the value and the relevance of multilateralism.

Resolution 1373 (2001) imposed binding obligations on all Member States to prevent and suppress terrorism. The Counter-Terrorism Committee, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Greenstock,

ably monitored the implementation of that resolution. Myanmar has taken the necessary legislative and executive measures to give effect to the resolution. The reports required of us have also been submitted. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the firm commitment of Myanmar against terrorism and our resolve to fully cooperate with the international community in the area of counter-terrorism.

I also wish to express appreciation for the valuable briefings that we were given by the Chairman of the Committee over the reporting period.

Allow me to make a few comments on the reform of the Security Council. The Council is at the centre of our system of collective security. We, therefore, would like to see a Council that is more representative, more transparent and more democratic.

More than 150 heads of State and Government unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration and resolved to intensify efforts for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. However, the report submitted by the Open-ended Working Group clearly showed that there had been little progress regarding critical issues, such as increased membership and the question of veto. My delegation is heartened, however, by the fact that the majority of the members of the Working Group favour the view that the use of veto be limited to matters taken up under Article VII of the Charter.

Myanmar has had the opportunity to outline its position on the reform of the Security Council on several past occasions. We would like once again to caution against the temptation to resort to partial solutions. If we were to agree to an expansion of the Security Council in one category and to make only artificial changes in its working methods, we would not be addressing the main issues. We would only be bypassing them and perpetuating an international system marked by inequity. The Non-Aligned Movement has consistently held the view that the expansion and the reform of the Security Council should be an integral part of the common package. We fully subscribe to that view. Cluster I and cluster II issues are equally important and need to be considered together. Any final decisions on the reform of the Security Council should be in the form of a package agreement consisting of expanded Council membership, in both permanent and non-permanent categories, and a comprehensive set of recommended measures to be institutionalized by the Council, so as to reform the procedures of the Council for greater transparency and the participation of Member States in its decision-making process.

The successful outcome of our efforts for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council is vital to all of us. The impasse at which we find ourselves could only be overcome by greater political will on the part of those concerned. It is our hope that realism will prevail and that our aspiration for a more representative, more transparent and more democratic Council will not be the vision of a distant future, but a cherished reality.

Finally, I wish to extend my delegation's sincere congratulations to Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election as non-permanent members of the Council for 2003 and 2004. We wish them every success as they work to bring about peace and security to the international community.

Mr. Valdes (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to begin Chile's statement by expressing my delegation's appreciation to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, for his introduction of the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly, pursuant to Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter.

I also thank those delegations that have spoken before me for their congratulations extended to Chile on its upcoming membership in the Security Council. We also reiterate our wishes for success in that important role to Anglola, Germany, Pakistan and Spain.

We join in the condolences expressed to the Governments of Indonesia and Australia because of the tragic events that occurred recently on the island of Bali. That dastardly attack proves the global nature of terrorism and confirms the need to maintain the unity of this Organization.

We note with satisfaction that the report that we are addressing today is presented in a new format reflecting the opinions expressed by the General Assembly on this subject at its fifty-sixth session. It also records certain progress in the right direction by including in the introduction a brief analysis of the Council's work during the period under review. Nonetheless, there is still a way to go before attaining the desired goal, which is to have clear and accurate

indicators of the progress made by the Council and a section with proposals for improving the working methods. The current presentation still maintains a formal focus that does not reflect the realities faced by the Security Council and, therefore, does not facilitate an effective dialogue between those United Nations bodies.

It is fair to recognize that the General Assembly has some responsibility in this matter, as it has not been able to implement existing agreements that relate to the report of the Security Council. As we are aware, in undertaking efforts to improve the working methods of the General Assembly, that body adopted several resolutions, including resolution 51/241, entitled "Strengthening the United Nations system", in which various tasks are assigned to the Assembly, among them, the assessment that must be made by the President of the Assembly of the debate of the report of the Council. However, the necessary political decision has not been taken to do that.

During the period covered by the report, the world experienced in horror the terrorist attacks of 11 September. It is necessary to highlight today more than ever the Council's speed and effectiveness in responding to those terrible events.

In adopting its resolution 1373 (2001), by which it established the Counter-Terrorism Committee chaired by Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock, and in creating the Committee established pursuant to Council resolution 1267 (1999), chaired by Ambassador Alfonso Valdivieso, the Council took decisions of indisputable lasting value. Equally, Security Council resolution 1438 (2002), adopted last night, on the horrible attack that took place in Bali also demonstrates this. In these times, when ominous forecasts are being made from this very rostrum concerning the future of our Organization, it is important to remember these facts.

During the period under evaluation, we note once again that cooperation between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies responsible for vital areas such as poverty reduction, development assistance, human rights and the environment, is crucial to tackle the root causes of the threat of terrorism.

Globalization is a source of wealth and of surprising, and often marvellous, revolutions in the fields of technology and communications; but it is still not clear to anyone whether globalization will include more people than it marginalizes. On the contrary, it is evident that the ungovernable process of globalization originating in wealthy countries is unleashing a wave of globalized destitution, fuelling alienation and radicalization.

New threats and challenges to international peace and security are emerging on a near-daily basis and constantly changing at vertiginous speed. The credibility of the United Nations in the new millennium does not depend on its will to launch an order based on force, but rather on its development of an integrated vision that would make it possible to deal decisively with marginalization, oppression and extreme poverty, to develop international law and firmly to maintain peace and security wherever terrorism attempts to impose itself.

To achieve this, it is necessary to decisively explore the Secretary-General's proposals for our Organization's path to reform. Furthermore, we think that reality will sooner or later oblige us to reassess the need to intensify action leading to Security Council reform in all its aspects.

It is my country's opinion that the Security Council should not and cannot continue to reflect the realities of the Second World War; it should reflect the new regional trends that today characterize the international system. The path to be followed should be based on the selfless search of the common good, keeping as the main guideline an increase not only of the Security Council's efficiency but also of its representativity and legitimacy, so that it may become a more democratic body, in accordance with the aspirations and the reality of today's international community.

We appreciate the attention paid by the Security Council to the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine, the gravity of which leaves no room for indifference. But it does not seem possible to ignore the fact that the threat of the use of the veto in this matter has frequently paralysed the Council, often stripping its decisions of effectiveness. Who is not aware that the tragedy of Palestine and Israel is one of the issues — if not the central issue — in present day international relations? Who can fail to recognize that the international community has decided to intervene, and has in fact intervened, in situations with lesser dimensions and whose threat to international

peace and security is much more remote? How much more deterioration in the appalling living conditions of the decimated Palestinian people — and how many more murders due to terrorism in Israel — can mankind tolerate? As the Secretary-General has suggested, the international community should intervene in this conflict, creating the conditions in which the parties involved can resume negotiations leading to lasting peace.

The situation in Iraq is a special challenge for the Security Council. The Council should adopt united decisions, reflecting the results of discussions that are transparent and open to all its members. Iraq, for its part, should fully meet, without any conditions or any procrastination, the obligations incumbent upon it under Security Council resolutions. Otherwise, the Council should adopt the measures necessary for the implementation of its resolutions. We welcome the decision to hold an open Security Council debate on this matter tomorrow.

We have followed with interest and satisfaction the results of the Security Council's missions to the African continent and the progress made in understanding the deep-rooted causes of conflict in the region. In this respect, my delegation expresses its gratitude to the Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Sierra Leone, Ambassador Adolfo Aguilar Zinser of Mexico, for his report to the Council on his visit to the Mano River Union States in June and July 2002. We also express satisfaction at the results achieved by the Monitoring Mechanism on Sanctions against UNITA, chaired by Ambassador Juan Larrain.

We recognize and appreciate the assistance and ongoing guidance given by the Council to the people of Timor-Leste, who achieved their independence on 20 May 2002, following a complex process that was at times characterized by difficulties.

In relation to peacekeeping operations, we feel that the holding of joint meetings between the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and troop-contributing countries is an excellent mechanism to include the nations involved in each case in the decision-making process. We support the fine-tuning of that mechanism, to develop its potential to the full, so that troop-contributing countries may effectively participate in taking the decisions that affect them.

Finally, we cannot fail to recognize the dedication of the Council to issues such as the prevention of armed conflict, small arms, children in armed conflict, the protection of civilians in armed conflict and women and peace, among other important topics.

Chile welcomes the fact that countries continue to come to the United Nations to solve their conflicts. Collective international security resides in the commitment of Member States to multilateral cooperation. But the preservation of this commitment requires an urgent adaptation of the norms that guide the action of the Security Council. We know that, due to the nature of the objective and the diversity of both views and interests, this will not be an easy exercise. It will be difficult. But that does not mean that it will be impossible.

The Organization can rely on the enthusiastic support of my country in everything required for achieving this goal.

Mr. Vento (Italy): First of all, I would like to offer the condolences of the Government of Italy to the Indonesian authorities for the grave terrorist attack that took place in Bali; our condolences go also to all the other countries that suffered loss of life in that tragic event.

I congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his decision to combine the debates on the annual report of the Security Council and on reform of the Security Council. This is a significant innovation that moves in the direction of streamlining the work of the General Assembly, as Italy and its European Union partners have actively urged.

Italy feels that we must make it our common priority to carry forward the reform of the United Nations, so as to strengthen its ability to act and to guarantee international security in a framework of stability and peace.

The past 12 months have been a particularly intense and challenging period for the Security Council. The fight against terror, peace operations, nation-building and political support for mediation efforts in several regional crises: the members of the Security Council exercised their various responsibilities on various fronts simultaneously, as related in the new documents submitted to us pursuant to Article 15 of the Charter. I wish to acknowledge the changes introduced to the content and the format of the

annual report and to commend the active contribution of several non-permanent members to that result. Italy also extends its congratulations to the Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, on his determined and capable leadership of that crucial Committee.

In the past year, the members of the Security Council have dedicated more attention to improving the transparency and openness of its working methods. That is commendable. The Council's wrap-up sessions have further proved a useful opportunity to assess the monthly work and to consider how its substance and procedural aspects can be improved. For those who, from outside the Council, make a responsible contribution, under Council mandate, to the maintenance of peace in various troubled regions of the world, from the Balkans to Afghanistan, from Africa to the Middle East, it is important to be able to concur with Security Council decisions. Allowing us to participate more frequently in the Council's proceedings will, to some extent, enable us to express our views on issues of direct interest to the international community. Further progress along those lines is therefore recommended.

Transparency continues to be a means by which non-Council members can influence the Council's decisions. It is not, nor can it be, an end in itself. That is why there should be continued progress in the interaction between members and non-members whose interests are especially affected, as described in Article 31 of the Charter. At the same time, as the Secretary-General recommends in his report "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387), we encourage the Security Council to consider codifying the recent changes in its practice.

We are aware that in some cases the political sensitivity of the issues addressed requires that the discussions enjoy a degree of confidentiality and flexibility. But when the Council's decision-making process becomes too opaque, its decisions lose authority and lend themselves to contradictory interpretations that weaken their implementation. We should all renew the call for full compliance with Security Council resolutions and other obligations under international law.

It is true that the search for consensus — gathering the broadest possible support for a specific line of action — may seem a laborious and time-consuming process. But when our collective security is at stake, it is necessary to develop an informed, common assessment that will allow responsibility-sharing at the international level. Ultimately, what we must all avoid is creating the impression of United Nations inaction, especially when a serious threat is imminent and certified. Equal care must be paid not to create the impression of selective or partial approaches, for example, when consensus is held hostage during closed consultations or when the Council is prevented from addressing a serious threat to the maintenance of peace. Making the Security Council vulnerable to accusations of double standards would erode its credibility and weaken its decisions. On that fundamental aspect, the Secretary-General's opening statement to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly mentioned some priority issues that will test the authority of the Security Council in the weeks and months to come.

When faced by the vicious threat of international terrorism, the Security Council proved that it was able to act promptly and decisively in a collegial manner. To promote global governance, the Council needs true leadership based on collective vision and shared interests and values.

That is why, in the context of the current debates on Security Council reform, Italy believes that the issues of representation and effectiveness should be dealt with in tandem. One cannot imagine changing the size or composition of the Security Council without, at the same time, carefully considering the consequences of any expansion formula. Those who call for an increase in permanent members should offer convincing reasons on at least two points: first, the political, geopolitical or global — and not merely financial — entitlement and authority for obtaining that privilege; and secondly, the impact of such expansion on the decision-making process in terms of efficiency and transparency. Indeed, new permanent members would only add to the Council's present shortcomings.

Italy is committed to efforts to strengthen the Security Council. Last year we formulated some proposals on areas where, in our opinion, the Council should step in. We are pleased to note that those issues were addressed and, at least in part, brought closer to a solution. This year we would like to focus on two particular questions.

The first is the relationship between the Security Council and regional organizations. Regional organizations make a decisive contribution to the implementation of Council resolutions. For example, Council activities in the fields of sanctions, the fight against terrorism and the conduct of complex peace operations, such as those in the Balkans — where a good example of an exit strategy will be set when the European Union takes over the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1 January 2003 — are greatly enhanced by its cooperation with regional organizations. One need only think of the Counter-Terrorism Committee outreach, or the 1267 (1999) Sanctions Committee. We must recognize that some regional organizations have developed their crisis-management capabilities to such a level that they can contribute to the decision-shaping process of the Security Council. The Council should therefore avail itself more frequently of the views of those regional organizations, since they are often equipped with significant political and financial resources and are better able to mobilize the will of the main regional players.

To that end, Italy actively promotes the identity of the European Union in the Security Council's work. We feel encouraged by the progress achieved thus far and by the awareness of the large and obvious potential for a greater cohesive contribution of the European Union in the fields of security and peace.

A second issue is related to peace-building and transition to a lasting consolidation of peace. In the past year, the Security Council has not launched any new peace operations. Yet, at the same time, it has restructured and adjusted the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping or peace-building missions in Afghanistan, East Timor and Angola and has started to reshape the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. We encourage the members of the Security Council to draft coherent and integrated strategies to support the transition to durable peace and stability. Those strategies should be based on the establishment of democratic institutions, the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, in close consultation with the largest donors and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes.

I conclude with a question. With the debates on Security Council reform entering the tenth year, how can we move forward? I would like to recall that annex VI to last year's report (A/56/47) contains a realistic proposal submitted by Italy and supported by many countries during the debates in the Open-ended Working Group. Italy believes that our proposal would make a very useful basis for building general agreement on comprehensive and meaningful Security Council reform called for by the Millennium Declaration.

Ms. Pulido Santana (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We join previous speakers in condemning the terrorist acts perpetrated recently in Indonesia, and we offer our condolences to the families of the victims.

It is a source of particular satisfaction for the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to participate in today's debate on the report of the Security Council, as the positive changes that we have observed in the functioning of that important body, as reflected in the report, confirms our confidence in our membership of this Organization. At the same time, we feel encouraged by the willingness of the members of the Security Council to address some of the suggestions of Member States of the United Nations with regard to the report.

It would only be right on this occasion to acknowledge the work done by those involved in this complex exercise. We would like in particular to commend the work of the Ambassador of Singapore, Kishore Mahbubani, and his entire team, for their professionalism and sense of commitment to the United Nations in taking on the task of presenting the report of the Security Council in a new format.

Like previous speakers, we would like to refer to some specific aspects. First, the application of a new methodology in preparation of the report to include an introduction that effectively addresses our demands for an analytical approach and a multi-part format divided into a number of chapters, is very positive. Such a layout makes it easier to gain an overview, while avoiding the duplication of documents that have already been published and are known to delegations, thus preventing waste in terms of resources, time and energy.

The schematic framework around which most of the report is built could prove useful if it is developed further — not so as to return to past methodology, but rather to form the basis of for an analytical assessment.

The valuable exercise undertaken in the introductory part of the report is certainly a useful

guide to that end. This approach could be extended to the entire document, but it would be particularly relevant for the second part, in which the issues examined by the Council are presented in the context of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Applying geographical and thematic criteria, as seems to be the case in the second, third and fourth parts of the report, would enable those parts to be developed analytically. Part II could be drawn up following the model of the introduction, with each subject being considered on the basis of certain parameters — for example, what did the Council do with respect to each of those items? What progress did it make? What implications does that have for international peace and security, or for the immediate and future prospects for each of those themes?

Following on from that, sections I through IV of part I could be kept, since they constitute a useful quick reference document, while the rest of the first part — those paragraphs that refer to meetings of the Council — could be subsumed into the second part, which would be developed in the way that I suggested earlier, on the basis of thematic, geographic criteria, rather than under the heading of "Meetings".

We believe that such a formula would be much more beneficial in making evaluations, providing information and presenting results. My delegation is convinced that if such changes were made, it would result in the production of reports that were more substantive than the summary form of this year's document, but not as lengthy as those that were submitted up to this year.

Such a methodology would allow, for example, for the further development of matters of great importance for the Security Council and the entire United Nations and its membership, such as the fight against terrorism. In that way, the analysis of that theme in the introduction could be further expanded, including it as an important aspect of the corresponding analytical section. Thus we would avoid relegating the issue to a mere chronological listing under the meetings of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) — in section VIII of part I and Chapter 17 of part II, under the heading "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts".

It would be very useful to have an evaluation of the work of that Committee, given that there is an excellent basis for it in the valuable exchange of information process that the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, has established with non-members of the Council. It would also be useful to have interactive public meetings of the Security Council in which the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee could be evaluated with a view to furthering and improving its work.

Secondly, we welcome the reference to the wrap-up meetings on the work of the Council. Our delegation greatly appreciates these meetings because the analysis already carried out by the members of the Security Council provides non-members with the information necessary to articulate a joint vision, to analyse the activities of the Council and to duly inform their Governments in an effective manner.

Although we value the reference to the wrap-up meetings and to the fact that the Council is continuing with that practice, we would also appreciate the inclusion in future reports of a summary of such evaluations, since by its very nature it would help to establish the analytical approach to which we all aspire.

We note with appreciation the fact that documents have been distributed in this respect by some members of the Security Council, in keeping with the responsibility of the presidency at the end of each month, when there has been a wrap-up meeting to analyse the work of that body. We regret that there are no verbatim records of such meetings.

We welcome the fact that during the work of the Security Council, as outlined in the report, certain thematic items were highlighted that are of particular importance to our delegation. These include themes such as women and peace and security; children and armed conflict; the protection of civilians in armed conflict; and small arms. We also note that matters relating to Africa take up a large part of the Council's agenda, indicating the interest of that body in such matters in the context of the new prospects that have opened up for that continent.

The delegation of Venezuela commends the Council for its attempt to coordinate its work with that of the Economic and Social Council, and hopes that it will continue to focus its efforts on these matters in

order to meet its objective of finding solutions to enable it to better fulfil its primary obligation for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Our delegation recognizes that the challenge presented to the Security Council by the Members of the Organization is a huge and very sensitive one, because it is not easy to satisfy so many countries with different views and interests and to offer an interpretation of the facts that is acceptable to all.

We feel optimistic because, given the fact that we have been able to make progress with this revised format, we see no reason why this exercise could not be continued.

In this respect, we consider that Ambassador Mahbubani's proposal that evaluation criteria be developed for the work of the Council, and that a methodology be used and research carried out that would yield figures and statistical data, would give the Council useful tools for the analytical evaluation that we would all like to see.

I should like to refer briefly here to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. It is interesting to be able to comment on both agenda items together.

Unfortunately, in this area we do not feel the same optimism that we did with respect to the report of the Security Council. We cannot fail to note that, regrettably, yet another year has elapsed without any substantial progress being made on the reform of this main body, even though we recognize the significant changes that have been achieved in various areas related to its working methods, the transparency of its functioning, an increase in the number of public meetings and periodic wrap-up sessions, and the institution of a more equitable way of drawing up the list of speakers in public debates.

These changes, even though they are good in and of themselves, do not address the main issue of the reform of the Council. A comprehensive overall perspective has not been achieved that would serve as a basis for the necessary changes, such as those relating to the composition of and an increase in the membership, the issue of the veto and working methods.

In particular, we reaffirm once again that it is not possible to dissociate the increase in the number of members from the question of the veto. The privilege of the veto, which we have consistently rejected since the very drafting of the Charter of the United Nations, must be eliminated, or, at the very least, its use should be regulated in accordance with the principle of the sovereign equality of the States Members of the Organization. That is why, in the reform of the Council, we cannot shy away from this question if we wish to transform this organ into a democratic, equitable and transparent one.

After almost a decade of study, examination and consideration within the high-level Working Group chaired by the President of the General Assembly, and despite the fact that many efforts have been made to achieve the objective for which it was established, Venezuela feels that this process has taken on some urgency. This is particularly true in the present situation, as all Member States face the pressing need to give fresh impetus to the United Nations, revitalize the General Assembly and strengthen the Organization, now that the Secretary-General has presented his report on this matter.

Even though the Security Council is very important, it is still one of the organs of the United Nations and so cannot excluded from the general reform process, nor can it remain on the sidelines of the major changes that must be made to adapt to the international system and to the realities of our times.

We hope that the spirit of reform that has begun to emerge in the Security Council will promote the implementation of the necessary changes, as referred to in the report, and will also have an influence on, and promote a general agreement among, the Member States with a view to achieving the elimination of the veto and increasing the number of Council members. The openness shown by the members of the Council in connection with the report demonstrates that change is possible, and that is why we continue to trust in the fact that the Security Council can be steered in the direction of the changes required to ensure good governance in the Organization.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Allow me to begin by expressing our heartfelt condolences to the people and the Government of Indonesia and to the families of the victims from all over the world, including many from South Africa, for the devastating tragedy that took place in Bali, Indonesia.

This terrorist attack reminds us of the urgent challenges the international community must now

confront. The people whose car bomb killed nearly 200 innocent civilians in Bali are outlaws who do not respect the norms and laws of civilized society. They mistakenly believe that they can achieve their objectives through chaos and bloodshed. Our response as the international community must demonstrate that we are united in our resolve to fight terror and that we remain ready and willing to respond collectively and multilaterally.

As stated by the Secretary-General in his report on the strengthening of the United Nations,

> "the need for a strong multilateral institution — one dedicated to the service of humanity as a whole — has never been more acutely felt than it is today, in the era of globalization". *(A/57/387, chapter I, para. 2)*

We have before us two reports — one from the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform and the other from the Security Council, reporting on its work for the year 2001-2002.

It is now nine years since Member States began the debate on the reform of the Security Council. South Africa has held a consistent and clear position, in line with that of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of African Unity/African Union, that the membership of the Security Council should be expanded to correct the imbalances in its composition. It is our view that expansion should occur in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

Furthermore, we believe that new permanent members of an expanded Security Council should have the same rights as do current permanent members. We call for the curtailment and eventual elimination of the veto. The fact that we have not made progress on these critical issues in the Open-ended Working Group over the course of nine years of deliberations has not deterred us in any way. We agree with the Secretary-General when he states in his report on the strengthening of the United Nations that:

> "In the eyes of much of the world, the size and composition of the Security Council appear insufficiently representative. The perceived shortcomings in the Council's credibility contribute to a slow but steady erosion of its authority, which in turn has grave implications for international peace and security." *(ibid., para. 20)*

The words of the Secretary-General should encourage us to intensify our efforts to reform the Security Council. We cannot give up at this point.

We welcome the improvement in the format of the report on the work of the Security Council. Its contents reaffirm that the preceding year has been one of the busiest in the Council's history. Although the report has fewer pages than in previous years, it can benefit from further review by the Members. Member States would have appreciated an overall assessment of the work that is brought before the Council and of how Council members arrived at some of their most difficult decisions. For example, the Security Council narrative on "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question" does not explain the reasoning behind some decisions taken on this important issue.

My delegation, acting in our capacity as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, submitted two letters to the Security Council addressing the situation in Palestine. In March 2002, we requested the Security Council to consider inviting Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel and President Yasser Arafat of Palestine to come to New York to discuss the situation in the Middle East with the Security Council. In April 2002, we reminded the Council of the recommendation already made by some of the NAM members that the Security Council visit Israel and Palestine at the earliest opportunity to familiarize itself with the situation on the ground. In both cases, we were unable to convince the Council to act on these suggestions and we have yet to understand why the Security Council dismissed these suggestions. Perhaps the report of the Council could have been used to throw more light on the thinking of the Council on such complicated issues.

We also welcome the increased number of open meetings, which provide greater opportunities for participation by non-members in the work of the Security Council. We particularly appreciate the creativity shown by some Council Presidents who deviated from the standard practice whereby the Council members usually speak first while the non-members listen. Some of the open meetings benefited from the Council's first listening to the rest of the membership before sharing its views. This allowed non-members to contribute directly to the decision-making of the Council. Sometimes there has been interactive dialogue in the Council, which has also been greatly appreciated.

We are particularly appreciative of the transparency in the work carried out by Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock in his capacity as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. His regular briefings to Member States have allowed for an exchange of views between the Security Council and the rest of the membership, which had never happened before. We hope that this will set the example for how the Security Council can engage the rest of the membership.

We note with satisfaction that the progress made in the working methods of the Council is directly linked to the Working Group's efforts to improve the working methods of the Security Council. Indeed, the Working Group's success is reflected in the positive manner in which the Security Council itself has considered and adopted measures to improve its working methods. In the light of the positive changes that the Security Council has undertaken in its procedures, we support the call of the Secretary-General for the Council to codify the recent changes in its own practice and to adopt standard and predictable, rather than provisional, rules of procedure. Fifty years are sufficient time for the Council to decide whether to make its rules permanent or not. The world seeks not only a representative Council, but a predictable one as well.

Another interesting improvement by the Council has been the willingness to cooperate with other bodies, such as the Economic and Social Council. We appreciate that and we believe this has inspired the Council's efforts to diversify the requisite skills of peace missions to address gender, HIV/AIDS and the plight of children in conflict situations. It is a recognition that the Security Council cannot work alone in ensuring the success of disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. We therefore urge the Security Council to continue to forge closer working relations with other United Nations bodies and international agencies to improve coordination and cooperation in dealing with post-conflict situations, as well as to avert the conditions that lead to insecurity and violent conflict.

The large number of conflict situations, many in Africa, that the Security Council remains seized of reminds us that we have to make even greater strides in resolving the root causes of conflict. In pursuing its mandate of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council must uphold the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and ensure that multilateralism does not become a vehicle for the strong to prevail over the weak. In this regard, serious attention needs to be given to the Security Council's sanctions regimes and, in particular, the severe unintended consequences that sanctions have on third States and vulnerable communities.

The Security Council, and indeed the United Nations, cannot be party to increasing the humanitarian suffering of civilians who are caught up in situations of conflict, nor can it be convinced to agree to decisions which will subject and condemn large numbers of innocent civilians to conditions of war in efforts to enforce its resolutions. Through the United Nations Charter, we adopted a system of collective security and we now have to act with resolve to protect our rules-based system of international relations. The norms and fundamental principles of international law must be our basis for establishing the conditions for peace, justice and human dignity.

The Security Council should represent our collective security concerns and ultimately be accountable to the entire United Nations. The Secretary-General also notes in his report that

> "the perceived shortcomings in the Council's credibility contribute to a slow but steady erosion of its authority, which in turn has grave implications for international peace and security". (*A/57/387, para. 20*)

The Security Council's role in maintaining international peace and security is a core function of the United Nations. The credibility and the respect that the Security Council deserves will largely depend on whether we, the Member States, ensure that it remains the universal repository of our efforts in the maintenance of peace and security.

It has always been a source of comfort for those of us who are non-members of the Security Council that there are 10 elected members that we choose to represent our views. The elected members have their own special role to play in the Council's deliberations. Elected members may not always have the same resources or even global influence as permanent members do. However, they bring credibility and value to the Council by virtue of having been chosen by the members of General Assembly. They bring balance to the decisions of the Council. We are therefore dismayed to learn that these elected members are often excluded from participating in the consultations on the

most pressing issues before the Council. This is totally unacceptable and can only add to the erosion of the authority and legitimacy of Security Council decisions.

In combining the two reports — one on the reform of the Security Council and another on the work of the Council — we have been exposed to the positive and encouraging achievements of the Council and the areas which still need attention. Suggestions have been made that the two reports be separated and considered as different agenda items. The report on the work of the Security Council is mandated by the Charter. The reform of the Security Council is also inspired by the desire to live up to the spirit of the Charter. Although these are very different, we believe that, for this session, the membership has benefited by considering both reports at the same time.

As we have already stated, the deadlock we face on the reform of the Security Council needs an urgent and new impetus. We call on Mr. Kavan, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform, to consider taking the debate to a higher political level. The Working Group cannot continue for a tenth year of business as usual. We concur with the Secretary-General's conclusion in his report that

> "no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council". (*ibid.*)

We join in celebrating the successes that we have achieved as the United Nations, particularly through the efforts of the Security Council, the latest of which has been the admission of an independent and sovereign Timor-Leste to our family of nations. These successes should inspire the Security Council to act on its responsibility to those peoples who still suffer under occupation and oppression in Palestine, Western Sahara and beyond. The peoples of those territories will continue to look to the Security Council for assistance to alleviate their plight and fulfil our Charter's pledge. We have to ensure that the Security Council does not fail them.

Our combined efforts must therefore be to support multilateralism and collective security, and to work towards a credible and more representative Security Council. International peace and security are prerequisites for sustainable development and for the fostering of friendly relations among all nations.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.30

General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

30th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 15 October 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 11 and 40 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/57/2 and A/57/2/Corr.1)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters: report of the Open-ended Working Group

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): Let me begin by joining all those who have spoken before me in condemning the recent terrorist attack in Bali, extending to the Government and people of Indonesia my delegation's condolences on the extensive loss they suffered. That sad incident further underscores the urgency of the United Nations developing realistic approaches to combating terrorism throughout the world. The Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee has made an impressive start. My delegation urges that it continue to fine-tune its perspectives and actions on the war against terrorism.

My delegation appreciates the completeness with which the report of the Security Council has been delivered. The achievements in the period under review have been many and impressive — a testimony to the hard work, focus and determination on the part of all members of the Council.

My delegation notes with much satisfaction the impressive achievements registered in the Council's efforts to put out the fires of war. Sierra Leone has fully resolved the conflict that engulfed its territory for a whole decade and has successfully transformed the main militia, the Revolutionary United Front, into a political party, which participated fully in the recently-held multiparty parliamentary and presidential elections. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a significant breakthrough was achieved when Rwanda and Uganda entered into an agreement with the Democratic Republic of the Congo to withdraw their troops. Other protagonists in the conflict there have also undertaken to do the same. In Angola, the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), which waged a relentless war against the Government for several decades, has formally agreed to lay down its arms and to pursue its objectives politically. In the Sudan, the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army have signed and are implementing the Machacos Protocol, heralding a process that will hopefully lead to lasting and durable peace. The hand of the Council was clearly visible in all those successes.

There are still festering problems, which the Council must continue to address with ingenuity and imagination. Liberia — and to a lesser extent the wider Mano River Union — is still simmering. The conflict in the southern Senegalese region of Cassamance has raged unabated for two decades now. And, sadly, new full-blown civil strife has very recently begun in Côte d'Ivoire.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Guinea-Bissau which successfully concluded its democratic transition, is still not out of the woods, having failed to secure the resources necessary for it to begin giving meaning to its democracy and building the requisite economic props for security and stability to take hold. Here, the Gambia, in its capacity as Chairman of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau, would like to commend the Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Africa, under the able Chairmanship of Ambassador Koonjul of Mauritius, for its initiative in establishing the necessary interface with the Economic and Social Council, as the situation prevailing in Guinea-Bissau so glaringly demands. We also commend the initiatives of the Council in addressing a letter of support for Guinea-Bissau to the Bretton Woods institutions and to the African Development Bank. We sincerely hope that the Council will follow up on those initiatives with a view to ensuring that Guinea-Bissau is invested with the capacities and capabilities needed for it to stay clear of the looming threat of conflict.

It is evident that the Council still has a full agenda on conflict management and resolution in West Africa, which I am sure it will address assiduously in the year to come.

The spiralling cycle of violence in the Middle East, in the year under review, has caused havoc and devastation in terms of loss of property and human life. Sadly, the pleas made by the Council to the parties to the conflict through the numerous resolutions that it passed have all fallen on deaf ears. That regrettable situation only undermines the authority of the Security Council and puts its efficacy in serious question. The United Nations Charter enjoins us all to eschew war and to adhere to peaceful means of resolving conflicts between nations. It is the responsibility of the members of the Security Council to ensure that all nations of the world — big or small, strong or weak — adhere to that sacred principle of the United Nations. Not to do so would amount to the Council's abdication of its responsibility and its betrayal of the trust confided in it.

Although the Council has endeavoured to involve non-members more in its work, including by increasing the frequency of its open meetings and periodic wrap-up sessions, there still remains much more to be accomplished in our bid to render it more transparent and more reflective of the realities of the twenty-first century. No progress has been made in our call for the permanent seats to be increased to ensure a more equitable distribution across geographic regions. Equally, no headway has been made in efforts to reform the veto.

The situation remains unacceptable to my delegation. My Government stands by the 1997 Harare Declaration of the Assembly of heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the reform of the Council, which, inter alia, calls for the composition of the Council to be democratized and for its membership to be expanded to 26, with Africa being allocated two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats. Evidently, other regional groupings have their own opinions on how the Council could be rendered more democratic and more representative of the new mosaic of the membership of the United Nations in the twenty-first century.

My delegation would like to see the Working Group on the restructuring of the Council conclude its business with the minimum delay so that its report and recommendations could be submitted to the General Assembly for appropriate action.

My delegation also wishes to stress the need for the Security Council to show more transparency in the way it handles the question of sanctions, as well as the drawing up and management of travel ban lists. Individuals being singled out for sanction, as well as their Governments, must be informed of the reasons for the decision and be afforded an opportunity to defend themselves. That is the only just and democratic way to handle the matter. The current practice may only lead to the implementation of the sanctions becoming ineffective, as Governments which may feel genuinely aggrieved and yet can find no redress begin deciding not to comply.

I do sincerely hope that those issues will be given the Council's most serious attention. And as I wish the entire membership of the Council the very best in the coming year, let me seize this opportunity to commend the outgoing elected members — Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore — for their stewardship during their term of office and to congratulate the new members — Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain — on their election.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like representatives who have preceded me in taking the floor, I should like to express to the delegation of

Indonesia our most sincere sympathy concerning the events that took place in Bali a few days ago.

Today, we are debating two items on our agenda, but I shall focus my comments on the report of the Security Council. There are two reasons for that. First, I would have very little to add to what I said in this Hall exactly one year ago on the imperative of moving forward with Council reform, and we would not gain much by reiterating, year after year, positions that we all know. Secondly — and here I would differ with some representatives who have spoken before me — I would have preferred to keep both agenda items separate. Although there is an obvious link between them, I think the report that the Council submits to us is sufficiently important to merit separate consideration. Needless to say, the report is one of the principal links between the General Assembly and the Council.

Indeed, as we all know, Article 15 of the Charter provides that the General Assembly "shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council". That assumes something more than a symbolic or ceremonial act; rather, it constitutes one of the branches of communication between the organs and, above all, a tool that enables the Assembly to play its role as the principal organ for deliberating, for adopting policies and for representing the United Nations.

Members may recall that the report we received last year did not even minimally fulfil the explicit intent of the Article I have cited. For that reason, we pointed out then that the report was too descriptive, excessively lengthy and totally devoid of those elements that would have enabled Members that do not have the privilege of belonging to the Security Council to evaluate its work. That, in fact, tended to undervalue the General Assembly itself.

The report that we have received this year (A/57/2) represents a step in the right direction to correct the situation I have just described. It is an improvement in respect of its length, because it is much shorter, and content, because it is more analytical. Although it does not fully meet our expectations, at least it fulfils the task of keeping the General Assembly duly informed on the Council's copious work programme during the period under review.

That programme reveals important advances that are also achievements of the United Nations. Noteworthy among them are the developments in events with regard to Timor-Leste, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. The same can be said about Afghanistan and the operations carried out in the Balkans with the participation of the United Nations. And, although one cannot speak of progress in the Middle East — rather, the contrary is certainly the case — at least the Security Council's deliberations have contributed to keeping that matter on the priority agenda and to giving the United Nations an opportunity to participate in the work of the Quartet to find ways out of the situation.

One should also recognize that the work of the Council itself has made some gains with regard to transparency, thanks to various factors. Among them, we should like to recall the contribution of Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock of the United Kingdom, in his capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001). Perhaps because that resolution's provisions are binding on all Member States, but also because of Ambassador Greenstock's ability, his programme of outreach to delegations that do not belong to the Council deserves to be commended and imitated in similar cases. Not only has it been possible to inform all Members of Council activities on a matter of special relevance, but the Council has also heard their suggestions, observations and concerns.

In addition, the perception has been further institutionalized that Council members — particularly those that are elected — represent Member States as a whole. In that connection, my delegation is grateful to the delegations of Jamaica, Colombia and Mexico for having kept all the members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States informed of Council activities.

The growing practice of holding public meetings has also contributed to the closer involvement of all States in the Council's work, at least by providing them the opportunity to express their views on subjects that the Council considers relevant, despite the fact that there is room for doubt as to whether external points of view have an appreciable influence on the decisions ultimately adopted. Finally, the perception also exists that even the permanent members have been more sensitive than before to criticism concerning the closed

nature of the Council's work. The frequent statements of Presidents whose countries belong to that group attest to such sensitivity.

Despite all that, one cannot fail to recognize that the relationship between the organs of the United Nations — especially that between the Security Council and the General Assembly — leaves much to be desired. It could be argued that the concentration of decision-making power on the highest-profile questions in this forum of 15 countries — dominated by the five permanent members, as everyone knows — has, up to now, been at the expense of the Assembly's authority. That does not have to be the case, since the Charter provides that the organs — each with its own particular composition and its own specialized area of competence — mutually support one another. But experience has shown us — and we have repeatedly lamented the fact in this Hall — that, as the Council gains ascendancy, the Assembly loses it.

That being so, the report of the Security Council implicitly reminds us of two crucial tasks that remain unaccomplished. I am referring, of course, to the ongoing reform of the working methods of the General Assembly and to the long-delayed reform of the composition of the Security Council — namely, the second agenda item we are dealing with today, one that, as I said, I will not touch upon at this time, since our views thereon have been put forward repeatedly.

One could, to be sure, speak at somewhat greater length on the agenda concerning reform and also comment on the United Nations system of governance, which no doubt is in need of modernization. It is regrettable that this part of the equation is virtually absent from the proposal just made by the Secretary-General regarding further reform of the United Nations, a proposal we shall be considering next week. In short, the unsatisfactory existing relationship between the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council is a challenge that, sooner or later, we shall have to take up seriously.

In conclusion, it is hoped that, pending the reform of our principal organs, we will at least be able to strengthen the few links that already do exist between them. In this connection, one can affirm that the timid first steps taken last year in response to that challenge point in the right direction, as already stated, and that the report before us now is undoubtedly to be regarded as a small step forward.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to extend Tunisia's condolences to our sister country, Indonesia, and to the victims of the terrorist act in Bali, an act we vigorously condemn. Our sympathies also go out to the families of all of the victims.

Madam President, allow me now to join previous speakers in thanking this month's President of the Security Council for presenting the Council's report to the General Assembly in its new format. I would also like to recognize the Ambassador of Singapore, originator of this new format, for the commendable efforts that he and his team made to improve the Council's report. In this regard, we are glad that the unnecessary lengthiness of the report has been reduced. This has the double advantage of facilitating its reading and cutting the costs of its production.

As for the content of the report, we greet with great satisfaction the most prominent improvement, which is the implementation of an analytical approach in the introductory section. Clearly, we owe this important step to the delegation of the United Kingdom, who authored this part of the report. Nevertheless, the progress that has been made remains incomplete, and we call on the Security Council to extend the analytical approach throughout the entirety of the report so that all Member States can gain a clear idea of the conduct of the Council's work and the rationale behind its decisions, and therefore be able to evaluate their pertinence and recommend appropriate adjustments where needed.

We call for these changes in order to increase the transparency of the Security Council and thus improve its credibility. We should acknowledge the Council's sustained efforts to improve its working methods in response to the concerns of Member States that have been expressed here, as well as within the framework of the Working Group on Security Council Reform.

Over the course of the period covered in the report, the Council held a record number of public meetings. Furthermore, it stepped up its consultations with the troop-contributing countries and reinforced its overture to civil society by organizing several Arria-formula meetings. Cooperation with regional and subregional organizations was likewise reinforced.

Sanctions were further refined by fixing time limits, taking into account their humanitarian consequences and by establishing monitoring

mechanisms to ensure their implementation. We regret, however, that the Council's approach to these measures was selective and tainted by political double standards, particularly in the cases of Iraq and Libya.

We do find, however, that in its quest to improve its efficiency and transparency, the Council has gone so far as to anticipate the expectations of Member States. Let me just mention, by way of example, the Council's missions to regions engaged in conflict, the wrap-up sessions at the end of each presidency, the joint sessions with the Assembly's Working Group on Security Council Reform, the meetings to follow up the Assembly's debate on the Council's report and the examination of the draft report by the Council members in a public forum.

Still, we have much ground left to cover before we achieve the necessary level of transparency and efficiency for a body that we have entrusted, through the Charter, with the vital responsibility of the maintenance of international peace and security. This responsibility should be assumed with faultless credibility. The Council must base its authority on that credibility. The view expressed unanimously from the beginning of this session is that the current threats to international peace and security are so complex and so intense that they require the international community to define a real system of collective defence for diligently and effectively removing these threats. The Security Council has a primary responsibility and leading role to play in this matter. For this, we believe it is imperative that the Council act as follows.

First, a true equilibrium should be established among its permanent members and its elected members. We believe that the elected members should be associated as closely as, and on an equal footing with, the permanent members in all the Council's deliberations on all questions on its agenda. The behaviour we have observed over the last few weeks during the deliberations on Iraq, where the 10 elected members are accorded second-class status, is completely unacceptable.

Secondly, the Council should establish real interaction with non-members and take their views into account by concretely reflecting these views in its decisions. Thirdly, the Council must accord the same priority to the issues on its agenda to ensure that the national interests of Council members do not dominate decisions emanating from the Council. Internal political considerations should not count when it comes to responding to a crucial problem that may involve the whole world in a war or even in a threat of war. Fourthly, it must harmonize and rationalize its policies relating to sanctions and regulate how they conform to precise criteria, taking into account humanitarian considerations and the provisions of Article 50 of the Charter. The sanctions must respond directly to the objectives for which they were imposed.

I now turn to another aspect of reform, which is the expansion of the Security Council. The overwhelming majority of the Organization's Member States demand its enlargement but cannot find a way of doing that under the Organization's currently blocked system. It has already been 10 years since our delegations began reflecting and writing on that objective, without success. The issue is still so current that, during his press conference on the report on the reform of the United Nations, the Secretary-General was asked whether the Security Council is democratic. I will read his answer, which I find admirable because it serves as a double lesson in diplomacy and politics:

> "I think the system at the United Nations, whether in the Council or the General Assembly, is reasonably democratic. If one country prevails in a group of 15, then the other 14 have agreed with it. A veto can block a decision; it cannot make a decision. To make a decision, you need nine votes, and other members have to go along with you. So if one country gets its way, then others have voted or acquiesced." (*Press release SG/SM/8397, p. 4*)

In other words, that elegant response blames no one, for the responsibility lies with all Member States, and it is their problem if they let it bother them. In fact, we have grown comfortable with nursing our grievances while enduring, without complaint, the wrongs of an outdated system, as if the tragedies that we are now experiencing simply did not exist, as if the rebuffs that the Council receives from some parties never happen and as if a Government, contested in its own hallways and on the street, refuses even to undertake a cabinet reshuffle.

Ten years of discussion is too long a time to reshuffle an unpopular cabinet. The principles of democracy that we have been taught demand that the majority be free to express itself, that it be able to organize to make its voice clearly heard, and that it

present proposals and formulas that have already been available for years and on which we can agree. The powerful cannot ignore for too long the world that surrounds them. Over the past few years, several individuals have presented ideas that could have served as a good working basis. I am thinking particularly of the initiatives of former General Assembly President Mr. Ismail Razali of Malaysia and former Ambassador Richard Holbrooke of the United States. But neither had a long enough mandate and perhaps the timing was not appropriate. The world was still at that time relatively prosperous and terrorism had not taken on the dimensions that it has today.

The Council was enlarged for the first time in 1963, from 11 to 15 members, and we numbered some 70 countries at the time. Our predecessors were clearly wiser than we are.

A sort of gentlemen's agreement was outlined in the individual initiatives that I have just mentioned, which propose a Council ranging from 24 to 26 members. That is a very manageable number and it is a working basis that could be useful to us as a frame of reference.

We should also recall that a large majority of Member States believe that the expansion should involve permanent as well as non-permanent members. If that proposal were adopted, we could then move on to the distribution between permanent and non-permanent members. That distribution should be pursued, and if possible, completed by representatives of the geographic groups at the current session.

If we want a "*Directoire*" that is more democratic and more representative of international reality, we must also agree on the criteria for enlargement. During the meetings of the Working Group on Security Council Reform, my delegation suggested some reference points that we would do well to reconcile, since, as a matter of principle, if we are still negotiating, it is because we have not yet reached agreement. We could make the following suggestions for criteria, but it is not a complete list: first, geographical representation — the golden rule of our Organization; secondly, economic significance and financial contributions of the countries. Japan and Germany fall into that category. Thirdly, the human magnitude of highly populated countries; I repeat, highly populated; fourthly, the use of systems of rotation, such as the one requested by Africa, which is also claiming two permanent seats.

Fifthly, we should take identities and cultures into account. The complexity of today's world requires that. Our enlarged Council should unite Western, Buddhist, African, Arab-Muslim, Latin American, Japanese and Hindu civilizations; and, as I said, my list is not exhaustive. Those rules, then, should apply to permanent members, who would all have the same rights. The negotiations on the non-permanent members should be even simpler, since we already have practices that are well established and accepted by all.

I will now say a few words on the veto. If we were to reread the declarations made over the last few years to the Working Group on Security Council Reform, we would be struck by the moral and political considerations urging unity of the Council and the unilateral or collective commitment not to make use of the veto, or even urging moderation. That nonsense has no legal validity. In law, a door is either open or closed. The veto either exists or it does not exist. We are not such dreamers as to believe, at this stage of international relations, that the veto can be completely eliminated. However, we do believe that we could make the situation more acceptable by requiring at least three permanent members to oppose a resolution. But we must do away with the single veto. We must do away with the single veto.

These remarks have no other purpose than to make this Organization and its Security Council more credible. We must, therefore, undertake a reform of the United Nations government and introduce to it, after 57 years, a greater degree of democracy.

Mr. Kmoníček (Czech Republic): I should like at the outset to express appreciation for the idea of organizing a joint debate on the report of the Security Council and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council. There are commonalities in these two agenda items and we can save time as well as avoid duplication by discussing them together. Moreover, the new format of the report sends a clear signal that change is possible — a signal that will, I hope, be transmitted to the battlefields on which we have been struggling with Council reform and enlargement for eight consecutive years.

The report's new format is not revolutionary, but it makes the document more user-friendly and provides a very useful overview, including in its introductory wrap-up section. Another considerable improvement is the adjustment of the time period covered by the report. In general, the improvements that have been introduced into the report deserve to be acknowledged as a positive development leading to greater accountability and transparency in the work of the Security Council, although they may still fall short of our expectations. I praise all those who invested their efforts, under the guidance of Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore, so as to make this new format possible.

The report also adds to the evidence that there is an ongoing dynamic in the area of the working methods of the Council. Although some of the changes seem to have been somewhat self-propelled by the Council, others may have been at least inspired by the discussions in the Open-ended Working Group. Such may be the case with regard to, inter alia, the relationship between the Council and troop-contributing countries; the opening up of private meetings; the conduct of some open Council meetings; and communicating and reporting to non-members. In any case, there is little doubt that the Council has benefited from the work being done by the Working Group with regard to cluster II issues, as well as from the increased interaction between the Council and the Working Group over the previous two years. I therefore encourage the Bureau of the Working Group to continue the practice of inviting Council representatives to have an interactive discussion with the Group, and I believe that further progress on the working methods and transparency of the Council is possible.

Unfortunately, on the other front — that of equitable representation on the Council and increase in its membership — the picture is rather gloomy. In last year's debate on this subject, which took place in the wake of the horrible terrorist attack, I expressed the view that as international security in the context of globalized crime calls for broader coalitions for collective action by as many States as possible, the need for a truly representative Council becomes more urgent. But the atmosphere in the Open-ended Working Group did not improve, and its progress on cluster I issues is, perhaps, more stalled now than ever before.

The position of the Czech Republic on cluster I issues is well known and seems to be close to the mainstream of opinion. Most notably, we favour enlargement in the categories of both permanent and non-permanent members, as well as some reduction in areas where the veto can be applied, possibly through voluntary commitments by permanent members, and other steps which do not necessarily require Charter amendment. But in the past we have also argued for a degree of flexibility, in the expectation that flexibility may be shown by others as well.

It would, for example, be extremely helpful if we could narrow down the range of options we repeatedly discuss in the Working Group on issues such as the use of the veto, numbers with regard to the enlargement of Council and other issues. Indeed, we already have more than enough options to choose from and, contrary to what happened during the previous session, we should move in only one direction: towards reducing the number of these options so as to get closer to the core of the matter.

Even if there were some progress on cluster I, it would on its own be unlikely to make the reform a reality. We should definitely not, therefore, lose sight of other reform vistas, including those indicated in the so-called farewell statement of Mr. Holkeri, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, on 10 September 2001, especially his idea of moving our discussion to a higher political level.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like first of all to join in the unanimous condemnation expressed in the Assembly and, yesterday, in the Security Council, with regard to the Bali tragedy. I would like, on behalf of France, to convey our condolences to the bereaved families, both Indonesian and those of other countries.

I have no intention of reviewing all the subjects dealt with by the Security Council in the period covered by the report before the General Assembly. It seems important to me, however, to take this opportunity to stress the progress made in the past few months by the Council, in improving its working methods on the one hand, and increasing the transparency of its work and its openness on the other. Finally, I would like to comment in particular on the work of the Security Council on two items that appear in the introduction of the report: sanctions and the Great Lakes region of Africa.

The Security Council is making rapid progress in its working methods. The report submitted to the

General Assembly for the period 16 June 2001 to 31 July 2002 well reflects this positive evolution. Thanks to the work of the Working Group on documentation and procedure, and in particular the impetus provided by the delegation of Singapore, the format of the annual report has been considerably improved, as a number of speakers have pointed out. The report before the Assembly is more concise than in the past and overlaps less with other United Nations publications. Its content is thus more easily accessible and more useful.

In particular, it includes for the first time an introduction on substantive questions. This — the fruit of the collective endeavours of the members of the Council at the initiative of the delegation of the United Kingdom — presents an overview of the principal actions taken by the Council over the past year. While that supplement does not constitute the analysis that many would like to see included in the annual report, it is a step in the right direction. It could be further improved next year. To take up the point raised by Ambassador Mahbubani at the beginning of our discussion, the Council may still be a conservative institution, but the progress achieved since its creation has been enormous, and that should be recognized.

The Security Council has demonstrated once again over the past year its ability to innovate and to improve the organization of its work. Several past Presidents thus set forth monthly objectives, following the initiative taken along these lines by the French delegation in September 2001. Furthermore, monthly public wrap-up meetings are being held increasingly in order to put on record the work done by the Security Council and to elicit the views of members of the General Assembly. This beginning of a culture of evaluation of their work by the members of the Council is something that should be encouraged

During the period 2001-2002, the members of the Council pursued a policy of transparency in their work, as is shown by the record number of public meetings held in the period under review — meetings that facilitated fruitful discussion.

But it is the quality of the debates, rather than the quantity of the meetings, that counts. The interactive character of such discussions could, of course, be improved. Our public debates do meet the legitimate expectation of the members of the General Assembly that they be regularly informed about major issues. At the request of members of the Council, the Secretariat also is now regularly making public statements on such important questions as the Middle East and Afghanistan, two issues that have given rise to such a large part of the Council's work since the publication of the last annual report.

The public debate on Iraq, set to begin tomorrow and which will no doubt last until Friday, will make it possible for all members who so desire to express their views on this crucial subject before any decision is taken by the Security Council.

Furthermore, the Council has enhanced its communication with non-members, as is evidenced by the excellent work done by the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Chairman, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, as well as by the work done by the Ad Hoc Working Group on Africa, under the guidance of Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul.

The second point that I should like to highlight is transparency and accessibility in the work of the Security Council; these two aspects go hand in hand. The Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), has continued to hold frequent consultations with troop-contributing countries — consultations that were inaugurated under the French presidency of the Security Council, in September 2001. The strengthening of this cooperation is entirely desirable. These meetings must provide a further opportunity for a meaningful dialogue among members of the Council and those countries contributing to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The Security Council is reaching out even to civil society, as shown by the Arria-formula meetings held at the request of non-governmental organizations and of representatives of groups concerned by the conflicts of which the Council is seized. These informal meetings have been particularly useful inasmuch as they provide additional information to the members of the Council on key issues.

This increased openness should also be reflected in the composition of the Security Council itself. As the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dominique de Villepin, recalled in his statement here on 12 September, France would like to see the Council become more representative through an expansion of its composition in both categories — permanent and non-permanent. France particularly

supports the aspirations of Germany, Japan and India to become permanent members.

This desirable expansion of the Security Council should benefit the developed countries and make possible better representation of developing countries. We should, however, bear in mind the emergence of new Powers and also enable the Security Council to continue to discharge its mandate under the Charter.

Thirdly, the record of the Council's work in 2001-2002 seems to us positive overall. Members of the Assembly will welcome the progress made in many areas, including, first and foremost, in the combat against terrorism since the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001), as well as in Afghanistan, under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. Nor can we fail to mention Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Timor-Leste, which became a Member of our Organization following its independence. In all these successes, the Security Council fully discharged its responsibilities.

Of course, progress has been slower in other areas. I should like to stress the need to continue to make progress on the question of sanctions. The Security Council has learned to make better use of this instrument. The sanctions imposed by the Council are today more carefully targeted; the idea of their limited duration has been introduced; and their humanitarian consequences are better taken into account. Better follow-up to sanctions has made it possible to lift the most recent sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well as those on the Sudan, in September 2001.

However, we must continue to refine this means of action to make it more efficient and less harmful to the people of the countries concerned.

I should like to conclude by stressing the usefulness of Security Council missions to regions affected by conflict with which it is dealing. As was stressed by Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou in his introduction of the annual report, Africa continues to represent a major part of the work of the Security Council. Having had the honour in May this year of leading the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, I was able to see for myself once again how useful it is for the members of the Council to have direct contact with all the parties concerned. It must be recognized that the situation in the Great Lakes region has also seen considerable progress recently, a fact that is worth noting.

The Council must take every opportunity offered to hear the parties and also to transmit to them tirelessly its own messages, because ultimately they do have an effect. Indeed, since the drafting of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, a number of the Council's requests have been heeded: direct contacts with heads of State; beginning of the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the beginning of the process of disarmament of armed groups; and internal dialogue, which right now is making progress. In a word, it is the continued commitment of the international community, in particular of the Security Council in New York and in the field, that is ultimately bearing fruit. France, as Ambassador Greenstock has said, will continue, in close cooperation with Great Britain, to work with all the members of the Security Council to ensure that Africa remains the focus of its attention.

Mr. Saleh (Bahrain) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I should like at the outset to express my appreciation to the outgoing President of the General Assembly, Mr. Han Seung-soo, for the tireless efforts he made during his presidency of the General Assembly during the last session and during his chairmanship of the Working Group on Security Council reform. We also wish the new President of the General Assembly every success. We are confident that he will carry out the Assembly's work successfully.

The General Assembly has devoted a great deal of attention to the question of equitable representation in the Security Council, which has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1979. Thus, the debates eventually led to the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. In 1993, the Working Group took the first step towards reforming the Security Council, the main United Nations organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The reform of the Security Council is an extremely important and urgent matter. It is therefore necessary that we redouble our efforts to achieve that goal. When the United Nations was created, it had only 51 members; there are now 191. The Security Council

is therefore no longer representative of the full membership of the Organization. It is also true that the number of items on the Council's agenda since the end of the cold war has continuously increased. The Council has thus become more active and seized of ever more questions.

From 1978 to 1989 the Security Council adopted about 18 resolutions every year, while from 1990 to 2001 it adopted about 61 every year. This demonstrates the greater number and variety of matters before the Council, including HIV/AIDS, women and peace, the protection of civilians in armed conflict and, since 11 September 2001, terrorism. Moreover, we have seen the establishment of a record number of bodies under Article 29 of the United Nations Charter.

All these and other changes require us to focus our efforts on and pay greater attention to debates in the General Assembly to achieve the Security Council reform that we all ardently desire. While such deliberations have been going on for 23 years, the Open-ended Working Group has spent nine years on this question. This has been very costly to the United Nations and the international community. We all seek a Security Council that is more representative, democratic, transparent and effective. The reform we all desire is limited neither to increasing the Council's membership in both categories, nor to improving its working methods; we must also try to make the Council more effective in objectively and professionally addressing world concerns and affairs.

The Council must no longer be prey to double standards, as has been pointed out more than once. In this respect, the permanent members must make every effort to stop the use of the veto. The fact that the General Assembly is holding an increasing number of special sessions under the Uniting For Peace resolution of 1950 demonstrates the Security Council's powerlessness, due to an increasing use of the veto that is obstructing its work. The Security Council must be more representative of the international community and should strive to work on behalf of the most noble objective of the United Nations: the maintenance of international peace and security.

The reform of the Security Council is not discussed in the United Nations alone; it is also a subject of concern to other entities and agencies and to non-governmental, research and scientific organizations. All of these have worked assiduously to address this issue and to present their views on the best way to reform the Security Council and to strengthen its role as the primary United Nations organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security in a world bristling with threats and rife with armed conflicts.

In debating Security Council reform, we must not forget events that have occurred over the past five years, in particular the changes to which we have referred. More open and public meetings of the Security Council have been held since 1998, enhancing its transparency. This is the kind of change that should be encouraged and welcomed; it can only help the Working Group in its debates on questions relating to the Council's working methods.

We are approaching the end of the year and the Working Group will soon be celebrating its tenth anniversary. The Security Council must therefore intensify its efforts, together with the President of the General Assembly and all States Members of the United Nations, to ensure that the Working Group's debates will ultimately bear fruit. We should also try to ensure that the General Assembly and the Working Group convene high-level meetings in order to complete the process of reform. Tens and even hundreds of proposals have been made and considered. Such proposals have been the subject of lengthy but inconclusive debate. No results will be achieved until the question of Security Council reform is made a priority of the General Assembly's agenda. When that occurs, the matter will be taken up at the highest levels.

I wish to touch briefly on the Security Council's report to the General Assembly. We welcome the improvements that have been made to the report. Its analytical introduction is a laudable change. It is possible to make it even more analytical without increasing the length of the report. That is just what we all seek. We all want the report to be less redundant and more analytical. We note that the report is more succinct this year. That, too, is what we have always called for. The contents of the report, however, must be improved. It must be made more useful to delegations; if it is, we will save time, effort and money.

We are well aware that there are many areas of contention in the Council with regard to the items on its agenda, but that is no reason why those matters cannot be considered more effectively. What we want is for the concerns of all delegations to be reflected in

the Security Council's reports. That could only help all Member States — especially those that are not members of the Security Council — to keep abreast of the information and objective analyses contained in the Council's reports.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada): First of all I offer my condolences to the people of Indonesia, Australia and all the other countries that lost citizens and whose citizens suffered so many injuries in the terrible attacks in Bali, Canada included.

(*spoke in French*)

We appreciate the efforts of the Council, and particularly the efforts of the delegation of Singapore, to improve the presentation of the Council's report to the General Assembly. At half the length of previous years, it is more readable, and its introduction, containing an analytical summary, is an innovation worth preserving.

Canada made a number of suggestions on improving the report at the last General Assembly, with a view to reducing duplication, size and cost, and we are happy to note that a number of those proposals have been taken into account. We believe that the analytical overview would be more useful if it were more candid on the plus and minus sides of the equation. The report remains too lengthy. It is a useful summary for researchers but of less immediate use to Member States.

Last year, I made a number of critical comments on the working methods of the Council with respect to its continuing preference for conducting business behind closed doors, the private Secretariat briefings to the Council, whose contents could easily have been communicated to other Member States, and the absence of any meaningful interactive debate. I fear we still have progress to make in all three areas.

(*spoke in English*)

At the same time, I do wish to go on record that the Council deserves credit for its work on a number of fronts — for example, its increased attention to the problems of Africa, including the establishment of the Sierra Leone Court, its sustained interest in the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and the continued excellent work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. At the same time, I must also register our disappointment that we have yet to see the long-awaited report of the sanctions Working Group, work that we initiated when Canada was on the Council two years ago.

We recognize that on some issues, the Council sometimes needs to meet privately. We do not think that closed-door decision-making should be the norm. We acknowledge that in some respects the Council has, to its credit, improved transparency. We have seen an increase in the number of public meetings, in private meetings open to all Members, greater openness in the work of the Council's subsidiary organs, particularly the Counter-Terrorism Committee, and an increase in Arria-formula meetings. But there is still a need for greater responsiveness.

It is important that Council members meet with non-member States before making its decisions and even more so that it pay serious attention to what the membership has to say when those meetings do occur. We recall that it was only under considerable pressure from non-members earlier this year, that the Council agreed to an open debate on the International Criminal Court before taking its decision. Unfortunate as we regard that decision, it would have been still more so in the absence of an open debate. When issues of great principle or political impact are decided in the Council, consulting the broader membership in advance of making the decision should be automatic and not elective.

On a related point, the jury remains out on the effectiveness of new arrangements for consultations with troop-contributing countries. In the view of my Government, more needs to be done in this respect, but we recognize that a useful start has been made.

The Security Council's working methods and procedures should move ahead in tandem with the Secretary-General's efforts at broader United Nations reform. We are attracted by his suggestion, in his recently issued report on strengthening the Organization, that the Council should codify its current practices.

In one crucial area, the Council is actually regressing. The unelected five permanent members are arrogating to themselves privileges that are found nowhere in the Charter. The elected, non-permanent ten — elected, non-permanent ten — are being treated systematically as second-class citizens. The five permanent members are meeting among themselves openly, even brazenly, and deliberately excluding the non-permanent members. Senior Secretariat officials,

by their participation in such privileged gatherings, are lending themselves to this practice. Certain of the draft resolutions on Iraq were given to the media before they were given to the elected members of the Council. One such resolution would even sanctify a privileged role for the five permanent members, both as an entity and as individual members. This arrogation of privileges undermines the representativeness of the Council, to the ultimate detriment of the permanent members themselves, as well as to the rest of us. We call on the five permanent members to respect the Charter and its principles which have worked well for the past 50 years. Power has its privileges; there is no need also to legislate them.

Finally, on the issue of procedures, specifically vetoes, the need for the five permanent members to restrain their recourse to the veto or to the threat of the veto is well known to everyone present. On the issue of Council membership, we also believe that while there is merit in a limited expansion in the non-permanent membership category of the Security Council, and in amending the rules of self-succession, we continue to doubt the wisdom of expansion in the permanent membership category. There are better ways forward to a more responsive Council, which can attract the support of the totality of Members. There are ways of making the Council more representative without endorsing new privileges in perpetuity. We should use them.

Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, I wish to associate myself with other delegations in expressing my appreciation to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, Permanent Representative of Cameroon and current President of the Security Council, for his lucid introduction of the annual report of the Council for the period 16 June 2001 to 31 July 2002.

I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, Mr. Han Seung-soo, and Ambassadors Thorsteinn Ingólfsson of Iceland and Patricia Durrant of Jamaica for the concise report of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform.

I would like to recall that last year, my delegation joined the clarion call of most Member States for improvement in the report and in the procedures and working methods of the Security Council. In this connection, permit me to congratulate the members of the Council and especially the delegation of Singapore, which, we are informed, was instrumental in the adoption of the new format of the report. Although the Council had a very busy year, this report is not only compact and more reader-friendly, as compared to previous ones, but also less costly.

We are particularly appreciative of the effort that has been made to accommodate the views of Member States in the introduction of the report, which attempts to provide an analytical summary of the work of the Council for the period under review. While recognizing this as a step in the right direction towards transparency, we urge the Council to work assiduously to improve upon the analytical framework since, as presently constituted, the report lacks the requisite information needed to evaluate the Council's work.

In this regard, my delegation would have appreciated a frank assessment by members of the Council of their work, especially since, for the first time, they took the welcome step of discussing the report before adopting it for submission to the General Assembly. For example, the section on the Middle East could have been more informative on problems the Council encountered in implementing its resolutions. Similarly, the portion on the all-important issue of sanctions was given scant treatment.

It is our considered view that underpinning Article 24, paragraph 3, and Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations are the hallowed principles of responsibility, accountability and transparency, and much more should be done to ensure that those principles are observed by the Security Council in its relations with the General Assembly.

Another praiseworthy initiative is the Council's decision to interact with non-State and non-governmental entities as a way of bridging the gap between Council members and the outside world at a time when the Security Council is dealing with many cross-sectoral issues. Yet the report is virtually silent on this partnership, which is important, especially in a globalizing world.

One of the most innovative ways for the Council to acquire first-hand information on conflict areas is through its missions to afflicted countries. My delegation would therefore, in future, like to see more information provided in the report on such trips if the Council is going to continue to rely on this system, as we think it should.

We are also encouraged by the number of open meetings and the monthly briefings given by Presidents of the Council, as well as by the periodic wrap-up sessions t which non-member States were invited.

Elsewhere, we wish to commend the Council for playing a pivotal role in the global campaign against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The Counter-Terrorism Committee has been a shinning example of transparency, and we congratulate its Chairman, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, for the yeoman's job he has done. It is our fervent hope that this effort, worthy of emulation, will be followed by the Council in its dealings with Member States in other areas.

At this juncture, let me express my Government's heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the Governments and peoples of Indonesia and Australia, as well as to the families of the victims of the recent horrific terrorist attack in Bali.

We also applaud the establishment of a mechanism to further improve cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries, especially the growing regularity and frequency of the meetings. My delegation believes that this consultative mechanism can be beneficial to all the parties involved in peacekeeping. We urge the Council to continue its peacekeeping activities and its comprehensive approach to dealing with conflict prevention, resolution and management, especially in Africa, if this least developed region is ever to achieve peace and security, which are indispensable ingredients in any serious attempt to promote sustainable development.

Equally important in our view is the partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations, since the regional dimension can sometimes be useful in dealing with conflicts. Since the Council spends 60 to 75 per cent of its time on Africa, we welcome the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Africa under the chairmanship of the Ambassador of Mauritius. There have been positive developments in Sierra Leone and Angola, but Africa is not yet out of the woods, and the Council will have to redouble its efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Burundi.

Mr. Hussein (Ethiopia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The consideration of the report of the Security Council is taking place at a momentous time in history when, because of the Iraqi problem, the eyes of the international community are focused on the role of the United Nations as the body with collective responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Naturally, under the circumstances, the role of the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has come to the fore.

If the collective responsibility which lies at the foundation of the United Nations requires and demands the cooperation of all Member States, the Security Council, on which the Charter imposes the primary obligation to maintain peace and security, cannot discharge this onerous responsibility unless its membership is truly representative and reflects the composition of this lofty Organization which currently stands at 191 members.

Moreover, one of the major items before the current session of the General Assembly is the reform of the United Nations. The Security Council, as one of the main organs of the United Nations, which since the end of the cold war has assumed more functions and has in the process become more powerful, should be a critical plank in the United Nations reform agenda.

In this regard, my delegation wishes to reiterate the need to enhance the credibility of the Council through substantive reform guided by the principles of democracy, the sovereign equality of States and equitable geographical representation. A reformed Security Council should be transparent in its activities and more responsive to the interests of the general membership in matters deriving from its mandate under the Charter. Advocacy for democratic governance and transparency should be applicable at both the national and international levels. This is more so as all Member States of the United Nations are called upon and obliged to share the burden of the maintenance of international peace and security through, inter alia, assessed contributions to the peacekeeping budget, the provision of troops for United Nations peacekeeping missions and implementation of resolutions adopted by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Against that background, Ghana continues to subscribe to the Non-Aligned Movement's position on all aspects of the question of the increase in the membership of the Security Council, complemented by the African position as expressed in the Harare

Declaration of June 1997. Africa — the largest regional group in the Organization — which has called for the allocation of two permanent rotating seats and two additional non-permanent seats, is, paradoxically, the only region excluded from the category of permanent members.

A periodic review of an enlarged Security Council must be an integral part of the whole reform package. It is our view that a review of the Council every 10 years will ensure continuity and flexibility to enable it to adapt to changing international realities.

It would be remiss on my part if I did not touch on the veto power granted to the five permanent members. While acknowledging the view of the five permanent members that the veto is an important tool in the discharge of the Council's responsibilities, we believe that it also stifles discussions and consensus, and we call for its restricted use and the eventual abolition of that undemocratic and anachronistic mechanism.

My delegation is committed to the reform process in the Security Council and elsewhere in the United Nations system, and we are ready to join others in that undertaking.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election to the Security Council. We entreat them to bear in mind the need to respect the wishes of our leaders by translating into reality their resolve, expressed at the Millennium Summit, inter alia, to intensify efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. I am confident that the new members will work in concert with the other members for a more transparent, accountable, efficient and representative Security Council, in line with the general reform of the United Nations, in order to make the Organization more effective in meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Ms. Ognjanovac (Croatia): The new format in the report of the Security Council and the changes made therein are valuable. The report has been transformed into a genuine working instrument. It is more reader-friendly and more organized. We especially welcome the analytical introduction, which we consider a good start. We commend the efforts put into the work on the new format of the report by the members of the Security Council and encourage them to further develop new improvements in the next report.

The year covered by the report was full of events that needed the swift and efficient reaction of the Security Council. The Council's response to the threat of terrorism after 11 September demonstrated the real value of the Council. The most important highlight of that response was the transparent manner in which it was made. That enabled all States Members of the United Nations to be fully involved in the process and to unite their forces in the struggle against terrorism, which thus became global. We hope that the lesson learned from that process will be taken into account in the Council's future discussions and decision-making.

Similarly, the Council's timely response to the situation in Afghanistan, with the full involvement of Council non-member States that participated in the public meetings on that subject, have put a once-grave situation that threatened world peace and security in the category of success stories in the Council's report. We commend the strengthened cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which we believe could enhance the quality of post-conflict management. In order to encourage similar positive developments, the Council must ensure the full implementation of its resolutions. Innovative and successful mechanisms such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee may indicate possible avenues in that regard.

It is unfortunate that we may soon mark the tenth anniversary of the establishment of Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council. Not much progress has been made this year. Although many of us are ready to undertake steps to begin serious reform of the Council's composition and of its work, some remain reluctant. We are all aware of the fundamental changes that have taken place in international relations since the founding of the United Nations as well as of the new challenges that we face today. Dealing with those challenges requires an innovative approach and an effective global response. That is why we believe that new resolve and energy are needed to move forward the negotiations in the Open-ended Working Group.

It is encouraging that there have been some positive developments in the Council's working

methods, especially with regard to the new relations with the troop-contributing countries. The Council's work shows greater transparency as well. However, we would prefer to see good examples at the beginning of the process rather than as its end results.

During the Millennium Summit, we all agreed that we wanted a strong United Nations. We agreed that, in order to achieve that goal, we must undertake necessary reforms, including the reform of the Security Council. We have the forum in which to discuss that objective; now it is time to demonstrate the necessary political will.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Let me begin by joining previous speakers in expressing our deepest sympathy and condolences to the Government of Indonesia and to the families of the victims of the tragic events that occurred in Bali.

The report of the Security Council that we are considering (A/57/2 and Corr.1) provides Member States with a singular opportunity to examine and to contribute to the fulfilment of its mandate. I welcome that fact, and I wish to take this opportunity to commend the Council for its report and Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou for his eloquent presentation.

As noted in the report, this has been a busy year for the Security Council. In addition to outstanding threats to international peace and security, the events of 11 September 2001 reminded us all of the dynamic nature of threats and accentuated their global nature. The past year has made it abundantly clear that no Member State is immune from unilateral action by States or by non-State actors when it comes to threatening international peace and security.

For their enriching contribution to the fulfilment of the Security Council's mandate, my delegation would like to recognize the efforts of the delegations of Mauritius, Singapore, Ireland, Norway and Colombia, whose mandate as non-permanent members of the Security Council expires in December 2002. Much of what has been achieved towards improving the Council's working methods and towards increasing the contribution of non-members was due to their commitment. They have set a good standard for those just elected, such as my country. I thank them all for that.

This report is the first to have been prepared in accordance with a note of the President of the Security Council (S/2002/199) aimed at enhancing its quality. Moreover, it is the first to have been adopted in an open debate. That constitutes a milestone in the procedures of the Organization, reflecting our willingness to improve our modus operandi.

Compared with last year's report, the current one is more reader-friendly, better organized and, despite increased Security Council activity, less bulky. It provides us with an improved overview of the Council's activities during the past year. Those improvements are the result not only of the efforts of Council members, but also of the great contribution of all United Nations members to the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform and to the work on the revitalization of the Organization. However, there is room for further improvement in the presentation of the report itself and in the Council's working methods and procedures, in order to enhance transparency, cooperation with other United Nations bodies and participation by non-Council members, particularly by States concerned with the matters under discussion.

Angola is convinced that the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform is an appropriate instrument for greater reform efforts within the Security Council, especially if all Member States participate fully in its deliberations. While it is important to respect current working methods, practices and procedures, it is equally important to achieve more openness and transparency in the Council's provisional rules of procedure. We must go further, especially with regard to making the Security Council more democratic and more transparent.

Angola supports the Harare Declaration of 1997, adopted by the heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity — particularly Africa's position concerning the composition of the Security Council, expanding Council membership and increasing the allocation of non-permanent seats to Africa. In short, we need to strengthen the Council's transparency and to improve its working methods and its decision-making process.

The current international situation calls upon members of the Security Council to renew their unequivocal commitment to the Charter of the United Nations in order to deal effectively with threats to international peace and security. Concerted and collective action by the international community

resulted in the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), clearly demonstrating that a multilateral agenda can be successfully pursued to deal with international terrorism. The United Nations, especially through the Security Council, remains our best mechanism to deal with threats to international peace and security. It is important, however, that the resolutions adopted be implemented by all Members.

The Secretary-General's statement before the General Assembly on 12 September 2002 (see A/57/PV.2) was a valuable contribution with respect to how States must deal with principles such as multilateralism, collectivity, responsibility and the rule of law. We in the United Nations must preserve those values in order to uphold international law and maintain international order.

In accordance with the Charter, the Security Council is a guarantor of international peace and security. This year was one of the busiest in the history of the Council. During the period under review, many issues have figured on the Council's agenda, such as international terrorism, the Middle East crisis, Afghanistan, the Great Lakes region crisis, the peace process in Angola, Western Sahara, Sierra Leone, East Timor and, of course, more recently, Iraq, which has kept the Council very busy.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains a great concern to my country. Angola is deeply committed to the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. As a result of that commitment, my country is an active participant in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. My country is conscious of the need to give impetus to the stalled implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and the recent Pretoria agreement, as well as the need to normalize relations, build confidence and bring about good neighbourliness in order to contribute to the speedy pacification of Central Africa and the Great Lakes region and to put an end to insecurity and instability.

In the Middle East, a resurgent wave of violence may challenge the efforts being made toward a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem as well as the Israeli-Arab crisis. We would welcome efforts by the Security Council towards facilitating a return to the negotiating table to seek a political formula that will satisfy the political and security interests of all inhabitants of the region.

Finally, Angola recognizes the positive work of the Security Council and of the Secretary-General, regarding the achievement of East Timor's independence. That is another clear and good example of how the Security Council can bring about peace under difficult circumstances, provided we use it wisely and stand ready to abide by our collectively arrived decisions. Angola is set to become another Security Council success story, and we are determined to work with the international community and the United Nations to keep enlarging the list of success stories in Africa and in the world.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): I would like to express Austria's gratitude to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, President of the Security Council, for his eloquent introduction of the report of the Security Council (A/57/2). At the same time, my delegation commends the excellent work of the Secretariat in compiling that invaluable source of reference. This presentation is a welcome continuation of the Security Council's dialogue with the General Assembly on the discharge of its duties pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter. That practice adds to the enhancement of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Council, bearing in mind the responsibility of the latter to act on behalf of the whole membership.

I would also like to thank the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Han Seung-soo of the Republic of Korea, as well as Ambassador Ingólfsson and Ambassador Durrant of Jamaica, for preparing a concise report of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. Furthermore, I would like to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election to the Security Council for the period 2003 and 2004.

An adequate flow of information towards non-members is a necessary prerequisite to understand and assess how the Council is dealing with political issues, and that should therefore be facilitated as much as possible. In our view, the President of the Security Council plays a crucial role in keeping the general membership fully informed about the deliberations of the Council. In that regard, the monthly forecast of the work of the Council constitutes a very useful tool for the daily work of delegations. The briefings of the respective presidencies and the information they make

available via their homepages have further improved over the past year. In addition, the increase in public meetings underlines the willingness of the Council to take into account the views of Member States and to use them as a basis for the Council's decision-making process.

The inclusion of a brief analytical assessment of the work of the Security Council in the introduction of the report is a very positive development. The relevance and the usefulness of that assessment could be further increased if it would cover and analyse more extensively the decision-making process in the Council, instead of focusing merely on factual events.

My delegation welcomes the efforts in streamlining the report. Substantially reducing the number of page of this year's report renders it not only more readable, but also more cost effective. It is of the utmost importance to explore further possibilities to increase the efficiency of the work of the Security Council. In that respect, let me pay tribute to the efforts of Ambassador Mahbubani and the delegation of Singapore.

The experience of peacekeeping operations has clearly underlined that the Council can only act successfully if it is engaged in a substantial dialogue with the Member States. In that regard, my delegation, as a traditional provider of peacekeeping troops, particularly welcomes the efforts of the Council to increase the number of meetings with troop-contributing countries and thus to improve the cooperation and coordination between the Council and the troop-contributing countries at an early stage in the consideration of mandates of United Nations peacekeeping missions.

The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly is undoubtedly a central issue of the ongoing debate on reform. Especially in the field of terrorism prevention, close cooperation and coordination between the Council and the General Assembly is necessary. In that context, my delegation would like to commend the highly valuable work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, under the very able leadership of Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock.

The maintenance of efficiency, as well as the highest degree of transparency and legitimacy, are equally important goals that should guide the reform efforts of the Security Council. The High-Level Working Group on Security Council reform can come up with concrete proposals, however, only if the underlying political impasse is overcome by a reconsideration of positions in the major capitals of the world.

I would like to express my delegation's continued support for all reform efforts directed at increased transparency, efficiency and legitimacy so that the Security Council can properly fulfil its mandate under the Charter.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): I join other delegations in extending condolences to the Government of Indonesia and to the families of the victims of the bomb attack in Bali, Indonesia, on 12 October, which we strongly condemn.

The work of the Security Council is of great importance to the functioning of the multilateral system. In the Charter's scheme for collective security, it exercises an important mandate and we must therefore give great attention to its report to the General Assembly, which is submitted in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter. We have examined the report and commend its presentation in a format which is concise and informative.

Jamaica completed its term on the Council at the end of 2001 and therefore had the opportunity of being a participant in the activities of that body during the period covered by the report. Over that year the Council had a very heavy workload and had to face many difficult and complex issues. Within the range of issues covered, the Council gave significant attention to African questions on its agenda. We agree with the overall assessment of the improvement in most areas of conflict in Africa and we believe that the work of the Secretary-General's special representatives and the Security Council missions to various regions, as well as the deployment of peacekeeping operations, all played an important part in the process of improvement.

Jamaica believes that it is also of great importance for the Council to continue to be engaged in the post-conflict period so as to consolidate the gains that have been made and to assist in the process of reconciliation and rebuilding. This is important if we are to maintain the current momentum and ensure the achievement of durable peace and stability. These are important preconditions for the promotion of economic and social development, which is an urgent task facing the national and regional communities in Africa.

We also take note of the important role of the Council in developing a framework for combating terrorism, with the adoption of resolution 1373 (2002), and in the post-war rebuilding of Afghanistan, which will need the continuing support of the international community.

The record also shows significant work done in the monitoring of peacekeeping operations to promote peace and harmony in war-torn areas. This activity has been reasonably successful and should remain an important priority of the Council.

We are less satisfied with the Council's efforts and progress in relation to the situation in the Middle East — an arena where renewed violence presented issues which require specific and urgent attention. We believe that the Council's approach could be more proactive in containing the conflict and in advancing negotiations for a peaceful and durable settlement of the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

We recognize that there are complex issues involved, but Jamaica believes that there are sufficient areas of consensus that would provide a basis for a negotiated settlement and justify the early convening of a peace conference. Bilateral and group initiatives are useful, but it would be desirable to seek the promotion of a settlement through a multilateral framework which would give global endorsement and legitimacy to the result of any such process.

It is important to emphasize that, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council exercises its responsibilities on behalf of the international community acting in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. It is therefore important that the Council's decisions should serve to further the broad interests of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security, not specific national interests. This is in accordance with the principle of accountability, which is established under the Charter and is an important element in good governance.

The other principle of good governance is that of democracy, which should guide the process of decision-making within the Council. It should take into account the views and opinions of the broader membership and in its own deliberations give due weight to the views of all members of the Council. Regrettably, in relation to a number of matters, and especially in connection with issues of the moment, there are tendencies within the decision-making process which do not accord with these expectations. Certain practices have developed which indicate a differentiation of roles between permanent and non-permanent members on the basis of the pre-eminence of the veto power. Whatever the realities, it is our view that all members should participate fully in the decision-making process in the context of more democratic procedures consistent with the 'Charter principle of the sovereign equality of States.

On the question of Security Council reform, we regret that after almost 10 years, the reform process has been stalled as a result of deadlock within the Open-ended Working Group. This does not mean that there has not been any progress. Consensus has been reached on most cluster II issues dealing with working methods of the Council, as well as in relation to the expansion of the membership in the non-permanent category. It is therefore important that we do not abandon the process and that we reactivate the Working Group and consider approaches which might lead to some reform. It is clear that we need to make adjustments to meet the needs of the United Nations membership and the demands of the changing international environment. All of us have a stake in ensuring that the United Nations system has the capacity to meet current and future challenges. None is more important than those relating to war and peace, in which the Security Council plays a central role. It is of great importance that we give support to the United Nations at this time and reaffirm our commitment to the system of collective security based on the non-use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and respect for international law. A strong and vibrant United Nations is indispensable in the new world order.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): I cannot begin today without expressing my appreciation and that of my Government for the many statements of support in a week that has been a very difficult one for all Australians. For us, it has been a reminder that in this House we are one family.

For the first time in many years, it is possible to speak on the report of the Security Council without bemoaning its excessive length and lack of useful information. The new format of the report is very much the result of Singapore's efforts, and for this I think that our friend and colleague Ambassador Mahbubani should be sincerely congratulated.

A welcome feature of the report is the new descriptive introduction which assesses the work of the Council. We understand that any such assessment must necessarily be cautious, but even in its current form it adds substantial value. We would hope that in future reports such assessments will continue and will be increasingly candid. This would allow for a deeper and more useful interchange between the wider United Nations membership and the Security Council.

Turning to the substance of the Council's output over the period covered by the report, one cannot but be struck by how busy the Council has been and by the historic importance of what has been achieved. Of the many agenda items, I want to highlight three.

East Timor's achievement of independence on 20 May was a most significant and welcome event. The efforts of the United Nations prior to 20 May and its ongoing presence and programmes in many ways showed the United Nations at its best. The Council's work in Afghanistan also deserves praise. The distance that has been travelled there in a short space of time has been enormous.

Valuable lessons can be learned from both the East Timor and Afghanistan experiences which can help guide the Council in future. Three lessons are particularly pertinent.

First, the quality of leadership is crucial. Lakhdar Brahimi's contribution to bringing together the Bonn Agreement and taking forward its implementation, in particular through the holding of the Loya Jirga, has made an enormous difference to Afghanistan. Likewise, East Timor has been very well served by the excellent leadership provided by my friend Sergio Vieira de Mello.

Secondly, a creative and flexible division of labour is necessary to deal with complex emergencies. In Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the coalition forces and the United Nations have worked together in a very effective way, doing together what none could have done alone. Similarly, in East Timor, in the initial phase of the crisis, regional countries had to shoulder responsibilities that the United Nations could not immediately meet.

Thirdly, complex emergencies do not end with the holding of elections or other symbolic events. The international community and the Security Council need to remain engaged, judging astutely how best to hand over responsibilities to new polities and how best to ensure that investments do not vanish in a precipitous rush to find an exit.

The Security Council's response to terrorism also needs to be highlighted — particularly so in the light of the heinous terrorist attack that took place in Bali over the weekend. The Government and the people of Australia extend their heartfelt condolences and sympathy to all the victims from all countries and to their families. As I said earlier, we are deeply gratified at the many expressions of sympathy, including as formally expressed in resolution 1438 (2002). We stand ready to work with the Indonesian authorities and others to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the attack. My Minister is in Indonesia this week in deep negotiations with our Indonesian friends to that end.

Resolutions 1368 (2001), 1373 (2001) and 1438 (2002), which, as members know, was adopted only last night, demonstrate that a united Council can react quickly, decisively and creatively to threats to international peace and security. Resolution 1373 (2001) and the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) also showed the potential of collective global action to address global threats.

The Bali attack again underscores the chilling fact that the fight against terrorism is by no means won. The international community has to redouble its efforts to combat the threat. The work of the CTC is central to that effort. Its success owes much to the transparent and consultative working methods, which have elicited a high level of cooperation. The briefings provided by the CTC Chairman, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, have set a standard that other Council Committees should emulate. The principles of transparency and consultation are, happily, being seen increasingly in the Council's working methods. We are pleased with the evolution of the Council's consultations with troop-contributing countries and with the trend towards open meetings.

Despite the will generated at the Millennium Summit to accelerate progress towards comprehensive Security Council reform, little has been achieved outside the area of Council working methods. The Open-ended Working Group made no progress last year, but this does not mean that progress cannot be made. New energy and creativity is needed to achieve a

Council whose composition reflects current realities rather than those of the 1940s.

Let me conclude by again expressing appreciation for the support we have had this week from the world family, sharing our grief at this difficult time.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like at the outset to convey our sympathy and feelings of solidarity to the people of Indonesia and to the families affected by the senseless attacks a few days ago in Bali that claimed the lives of 200 innocent people. My delegation joins all those that have condemned this barbaric act against innocent civilians. Terrorism affects all of us. Ecuador regrets the death of compatriots in this attack, which can only be rejected. We must pledge to make every effort to combat terrorism.

In this struggle, Ecuador supports the effective implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1390 (2002) and has been carrying out a broad-based internal strategy, including legislative, administrative, police and other measures. In terms of our foreign policy, we believe that in the struggle against terrorism we must focus on its prevention and on its suppression, on the understanding that this process must be based on a broader and more comprehensive multilateral strategy that is not limited to military or police action but that has as an objective the harmonious development of all peoples.

The Security Council in 2001 had one of its most active periods of work, as reflected in the report that is before the General Assembly. However, we are concerned that a report that should be a basic reference document of great importance to international relations is limited to a brief summary of what was done. It provides us with a list of meetings and resolutions that is quite lengthy but of little use. We had hoped to see a report whose emphasis was on substance rather than on form — an analytical rather than a descriptive one. We recognize that the comments contained in the introduction are a step in the right direction, but we think that a report of the Security Council must contain more substance.

In any case, it is very satisfying to note that the Security Council has made consensus its way of resolving matters under its purview. All countries would hope that the occasional breaking of this rule — motivated by the unfortunate existence of the right of veto of some of its members — will not undermine its democratic and equitable working methods. The democratization of international bodies has been a principle of Ecuador's foreign policy. This is a matter not of mere form, but of transparent and open procedures in universal debate.

The Security Council has had to deal with an increase in outbreaks of violence in all its forms, including terrorist threats and the imposition of force over the peaceful settlement of disputes, that represent an ongoing threat to international peace and security. However, these efforts have achieved laudable results, such as the conclusion of the establishment of the State of Timor-Leste, which is a credit to the United Nations as a whole and represents the triumph of reason and the principles of democracy and peace in the self-determination of that nation.

Likewise, it is encouraging that the Council's management has led to progress in the peace process in the Great Lakes region of Africa; in the improved internal situation in Angola; and in negotiations between Ethiopia and Eritrea and in Abkhazia, Georgia. It is also gratifying to note the Council's efforts to consolidate peace in the Balkans.

The Security Council must intensify its efforts to create negotiating machinery to consolidate the peace processes in Somalia, West Africa, Cyprus and Prevlaka. The juridical and humanitarian situation in Western Sahara has yet to be resolved.

The Security Council must make a major effort to secure a settlement in the Middle East, where violence takes an almost daily toll on our consciences. Events there have evoked our horror and repudiation. Ecuador, its people and Government hope that the peoples of Israel and Palestine will soon be able to live in peace.

With respect to Iraq, my delegation believes that it is preferable to resort to the machinery of the peaceful settlement of disputes, a principle that my delegation has always supported.

With regard to the report of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform, Ecuador believes that the eight years of debate on this issue should be sufficient to reach an understanding on the positions currently on the table. Machinery must now be agreed on to break the deadlock on this issue as soon as possible. The increasing and sporadic use of the right of veto is a symptom of the urgent need to eliminate it. Only thus can the Security Council

become a centre for debate and democratic cooperation on international peace and security, without any differentiation between or categorization of States. An increase in the number of non-permanent members of the Council is also of fundamental importance and should reflect the changes that have taken place in international relations.

The world looks to the United Nations in the hope of a better tomorrow and in the face of the paralysis and critical stagnation of political will to find solutions. When the Security Council is incapable for any reason of preventing war and bloodshed, civil society throughout the world condemns it. If we wish to see a world in which all peoples can live in peace and dignity, we must implement changes in procedures that do not respond to the challenges of modern history. Many of these procedures were put into effect more than 50 years ago. It is now time to review them to the benefit of all peoples belonging to the United Nations.

The world is in a highly sensitive and volatile situation. In these circumstances, an effective, transparent and democratic Security Council is required without delay if its resolutions are to be meaningful and to embody the legitimacy and equity to which all States committed to the principles of democracy, justice and fairness aspire.

Mr. Loizaga (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we join in the condemnation of the brutal attack this weekend in Bali and offer our condolences and solidarity to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the other countries that lost nationals in that event. In this respect, we welcome the adoption last night of Security Council resolution 1438 (2002). It is precisely that type of unanimous, speedy and effective response that the Member States expect of the Security Council.

It has been decided this year to consider jointly two priority items on our agenda — items 11 and 40. While they are closely related to one another, we believe that they have a single objective in common: a more democratic, representative, transparent and efficient Security Council to face the new challenges of today's world. Nevertheless, by the end of this debate we will have to determine the usefulness of keeping this format.

The report of the Security Council to the General Assembly undoubtedly marks considerable progress, in comparison to previous reports, with respect to format and content. The significant reduction in its size and the inclusion of an analytical summary in its introduction are positive steps that help us better to read and understand it. In preparing it, the Security Council responded to the demands of the great majority of Members of this Organization. These efforts of the Council to improve its report should be pursued and encouraged so that it may ultimately become the substantive and useful document that all Members desire and need. In this respect, we highlight the work of the non-permanent members of the Council, in particular the Permanent Representatives of Colombia and Singapore. We call on the newly elected members to continue working to that end.

We recognize that progress has been made towards transparency in the work of the Security Council. Greater effort has been made to hold more public meetings open to the participation of non-member States. Furthermore, more wrap-up sessions have been held at the end of each month. However, as the report itself reveals, most substantive deliberations are held in informal consultations behind closed doors.

This lack of transparency not only affects the other Member States, but is also felt within the Security Council itself. We are currently witnessing the clearest example of this, as deliberations on items of such vital importance as international peace and security are being discussed far from the Council Chamber and exclusively by the permanent members, sidetracking the other members of that body and all the States Members of the United Nations. This attitude is not in keeping with the spirit of the times or the principles and purposes of the Charter. The Security Council acts under the Charter on behalf of the United Nations and the United Nations is all of its Member States. We must not allow the Security Council to become an instrument used by a group of States or to be driven by unilateral action. Under the Charter of this Organization, we are pledged to unrestricted commitment to multilateral action. The events of the day mean that we must act together. Paraguay firmly believes in multilateralism and the legal mechanisms established for the maintenance of peace and security.

The adoption last year of resolution 1373 (2001) demonstrated that the Security Council can meet new challenges and act in a transparent manner. The committee established under this resolution, chaired by Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock, has been a model of openness and transparency vis-à-vis all Member States

of the Organization. It has shown that for the effective implementation of the resolution, we need the goodwill and cooperation of all Member States.

My delegation believes that in order to make the Council's work and performance more effective and to avoid any questioning of the legitimacy of its decisions, its reform is something we cannot defer. This is the goal sought — to increase the Council's efficiency and effectiveness and to improve its working methods.

As we pointed out at the beginning, the Security Council must be more democratic, representative, equitable, transparent and in keeping with the realities of the day. Its working methods must provide for and reflect greater transparency and participation; its composition should reflect the political realities of the day. The position of Paraguay on this has been set forth repeatedly.

In summary, Security Council reforms should be total and both categories of its membership — permanent and non-permanent — should be expanded. Both developed and developing countries should be included in this expansion, with special account taken of the latter as they are currently underrepresented.

Similarly, a fundamental aspect of these reforms is the question of veto. What we should seek primarily is its gradual elimination, until it disappears entirely. This would bring about a Security Council that is truly equitable and democratic. As a first step, there should be strict limitation of its use to questions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter.

Another aspect that we think is important to highlight is the improvement of communication and interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and indeed other bodies of this Organization. In this regard, we believe that it is vital for the Council President to report to the General Assembly on priority items of current interest, or specific situations which are the focus of attention of all Member States.

I would like to conclude by repeating that no reforms of the United Nations will have the effect that we want if the long-sought reform of the Security Council — the organ charged by the Charter with the maintenance of international peace and security — does not happen. Until it happens, we cannot talk about an Organization in keeping with the times in which we live, nor can it respond to the interests and aspirations of the international community.

Mr. Pamir (Turkey): Before elaborating our views on the two subjects before us, I wish to express our delegation's sincere sentiments of deep sorrow over the tragic loss of life which occurred as a result of the recent terrorist attacks in Bali. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and their Governments. We add our voice to the Security Council's condemnation of the bomb attacks, which was adopted as resolution 1438 (2002) on 14 October.

Allow me to congratulate the President and the other authors of the idea of clustering these two highly important agenda items into a joint debate in the General Assembly. Indeed, the reform of the Security Council is not limited only to the expansion of its membership. It also includes the review of the Council's method of work and its activities in general. Needless to say, the Council's annual report to the General Assembly sheds ample light on the work of this important organ of the United Nations.

This year, we have noted with pleasure a couple of positive developments with regard to the annual report before us. First of all, it is considerably shorter than previous versions; the financial and other implications of this effort are obvious. Secondly, for the first time ever, the report contains an introductory section briefly outlining the work of the Council within a given period. Thirdly, due to the curtailment of duplications, the report this year stands as a better-streamlined document. These are welcome developments, and we believe the momentum for the further improvement of the annual report, both in terms of format and content, should not only be maintained, but must also be stepped up.

On the other hand, we are also aware of the fact that the report itself, however detailed it could be, cannot paint a perfect picture of the intricacies of the Council's activities. Within this context, we are of the opinion that the assessments provided by the Council members themselves are complementary in nature and carry particular importance. Hence, we warmly welcome the Council's public debate on 26 September 2002, just before the adoption of its annual report, as reflected in the provisional verbatim record (S/PV.4616). Moreover, the annual debate in the General Assembly on the report of the Council provides an excellent opportunity for the wider

membership of the United Nations to bring forth their views and suggestions on the Council's work. We are happy to see that some of the recommendations made by Member States during last year's Assembly debate were adopted by the Council.

Finally, my delegation has also noted with satisfaction that the Security Council has already placed on its programme of work an interactive debate on the results of the Assembly's current consideration of its report. We sincerely hope that the annual report will continue to improve, with a view to making it a more informative document on the contribution of the Council to the maintenance of peace and security in the world.

As to the Council's working methods, my delegation wishes to put on record its satisfaction at the progress made during the period under review. The number of open meetings has indeed increased. Member States of the United Nations are now in a better position to channel their views to the Council on divers occasions and on a variety of issues. The mechanism introduced for convening joint meetings between the members of the Council and the troop-contributing countries is a welcome step forward. The Council's wrap-up sessions provide an opportunity to assess its work. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement. Instituting a better mechanism for the interaction of the Council with the other States and actors, particularly with those who are directly interested in or affected by the subject in question, should be further considered.

On the other hand, we hope that the members would reflect upon the idea of codifying the recent changes in the Council's own practice, as suggested by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387). My delegation recognizes the need of the Council members to work sometimes in a non-rigid environment. Nevertheless, the fact remains as an anomaly of the system, that the Council's rules of procedure are still provisional after 57 years.

Let me turn briefly to the question of ensuring equitable representation in the Security Council by increasing its membership. Since the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group, Turkey, like many others, has been an advocate of comprehensive reform that would provide the international community with a more effective and more representative Council. However, the lack of tangible progress after many years is indeed frustrating. The year 2003 will mark the tenth anniversary of the beginning of the Group's work. Therefore, we call upon all members to recommit themselves to this issue with renewed dedication and political will. Following the changes on the global scene more than a decade ago, many international organizations adapted themselves to the new realities. The United Nations, as the only world body, cannot fail in the task of reforming itself.

Let me conclude by congratulating the newly elected members of the Security Council: Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain. We look forward to working closely with them and with the other members of the Council.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Let me join previous speakers in expressing our sympathies to the families of the victims — of all nationalities — of the terrorist attack that occurred in Bali over the weekend. We condemn that attack, along with all of the other recent terrorist attacks.

Norway generally views the Security Council as a well-functioning and effective international body. Over the past several years, the Council has increasingly demonstrated unity and efficiency, not least when faced with new challenges such as last year's terrorist attacks. But if it is to maintain its role and authority in the future, it must reflect the world of today.

First of all, Norway would like to see a more representative Security Council. Enlargement is on our agenda because we consider it necessary to ensure better geographical distribution and more equitable representation on the Council. The time has come to strengthen the influence of the developing countries.

Secondly, Norway is of the view that the work of the Council should be more transparent. Progress has been made in that respect. There are now more open meetings, and mechanisms for consultation with non-members have been improved. However, work to further those developments should continue.

Our common objective is to make the United Nations a more effective multilateral instrument for pursuing the priorities set out in the Millennium Declaration. Moreover, in that Declaration we all undertook to intensify our efforts to achieve comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Nevertheless, it has proved difficult to reach

consensus among Member States on how to move forward on the question of enlargement and reform of the Council. We are concerned that the Open-ended Working Group has not reached a broad consensus. A stronger dose of political will is needed in order to break the current impasse.

We must reinforce our efforts to advance the Security Council reform agenda. At the end of the day, we are faced with an issue that has a bearing on the relevance and the credibility of the Security Council as an effective global decision-making instrument. We hope that, under the President's able guidance, the work of the Open-ended Working Group can regain momentum and can reach a successful conclusion. In order to move in the right direction, we must focus on ways of safeguarding the Security Council's unique contribution to world affairs.

Political will and determination will be needed to achieve wider and more equitable representation in the Security Council, in particular to ensure adequate representation of the developing countries. Norway supports an enlargement of both categories of membership — non-permanent and permanent. Non-permanent members are a crucial element in that they ensure fairer representation and accountability. They can be expected, as a matter of self-interest, to give priority to openness and to broad consultations with non-Council members. In addition, elected members should constitute a majority in the Council in the future. The combination of non-permanent and permanent members ensures broader representation, as well as continuity, in the work of the Council. Therefore, Norway also favours an increase in the number of permanent Council members.

Our long-term goal is to make sure that the United Nations remains a vigorous, relevant and credible multilateral Organization. As a global decision-making forum, it should now muster the inner strength to face up to the task of reforming the Security Council and thereby renewing itself.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): On behalf of the Government of Armenia, I want to express our deepest condolences to the people and the Government of Indonesia, as well as to other countries whose nationals perished in the deadly terrorist bombings last Saturday in Bali.

Armenia attaches great importance to reform of the Security Council and supports the ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening the Council and enabling it to react promptly and effectively to current challenges and threats. We welcome the notable progress that has been made over the years in improving the Council's working methods. We are particularly pleased to see the growing number of public debates, which give non-members an opportunity to participate in the deliberations of that important body.

While welcoming the increase in public meetings, we should like to emphasize the need for more transparency in the Security Council's internal decision-making procedures. We note with satisfaction the significant improvement in the Council's annual report, which, with its informative and streamlined format, gives the Assembly a valuable opportunity to reflect both on the activities and on the future of the Council.

The vast majority of Member States have articulated their positions vis-à-vis reform of the Security Council. The debates of the Millennium Assembly made it clear that most members favour an increase in both permanent and non-permanent membership. We also believe that real reform should include an expansion of both categories, in conformity with the principle of equality among Member States, as well as with that of equitable geographic representation. If the Council is to discharge more effectively its responsibilities in the maintenance of peace and security in the new century, its capacity must be strengthened through a series of reforms to improve its effectiveness and authority. Therefore, its membership should evolve accordingly.

With regard to permanent membership, we are convinced in particular that new permanent members should be ready and able to make a major contribution, both financial and political. In that regard, we believe that two seats should be allocated to developed countries in an enlarged Security Council. We also support the proposals to increase the regional representation of the permanent membership in the Council — especially with regard to the regions that are currently underrepresented, such as Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. It is our strong belief that any increase in the non-permanent membership should ensure an enhanced presence of the Eastern European States through the allocation of one additional seat to that group, whose membership has more than doubled in recent years.

In its responses to various conflicts, a reformed Security Council should make every possible effort to take into account, along with political considerations, the legal and historical aspects of those conflicts. That could further enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of the relevant Council resolutions.

As for the right of veto, we believe that the resolution of that issue will require the political judgement of all nations, first and foremost those currently enjoying that right. We think that reform is needed to make the veto more accountable and its application more limited. Equally, such reform should not diminish the effectiveness and political vitality of the Council. The present permanent members should come up with constructive proposals so as to harmonize the stance of the majority of States on this issue.

As the Secretary-General has highlighted in his recent report on the strengthening of the United Nations, which is subtitled "An agenda for further change", it is essential to reach a broad agreement with respect to the reform of the Security Council in order to succeed with the reform of the United Nations as a whole. The United Nations has never lacked proposals for reform. The reason and need for reform of the Security Council has already been laid before us for almost 10 years. What we need now is strong political will. Reform of the Council is not an easy process. A Council capable of effectively carrying out its responsibilities is of paramount importance to all of us. However, it is only through comprehensive reform that the Council will win consensus in its necessary role as custodian of peace and security in the world.

In conclusion, I would also like to join other delegations in congratulating Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election to non-permanent seats in the Security Council, and to express my confidence that those delegations will make positive contribution to the Council's work.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to join others in condemning the terrorist attack that took place in Bali a few days ago. I extend our condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the families of the victims.

I wish to say that the Security Council has in fact made some progress in assuming its responsibilities with regard to the events in occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and with regard to the Middle East in general. The Council has held many open meetings to discuss the dangerous deteriorating situation. It has also adopted four resolutions, including the important resolution 1397 (2002), which for the first time confirmed the Council's vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living in peace side-by-side within secure and recognized borders. In addition, the Council adopted resolution 1435 (2002), which falls outside the period covered by the Council's report to the General Assembly. Those resolutions were the result of ongoing concrete efforts by a large number of members of the Council, for which we are grateful.

Nevertheless, there were also many serious negative elements and developments. First of all, on 15 December 2001, the United States of America cast its twenty-fifth veto in connection with a resolution concerning the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem. That same permanent member of the Council also resisted the notion of even considering any further draft resolution on the subject, regardless of the text of such a draft resolution or of the realities of the situation in the field. I would like to point out that the Council was also unable to deal with two proposals specifically introduced by South Africa, in its capacity as the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement. Those proposals would have invited the leaders of both sides to attend a meeting of the Council and would have deployed a Security Council mission to the region.

There was also what we referred to as the great scandal, when the Council was unable to stand up to Israel, the occupying Power, in getting it to cooperate with the Secretary-General and to implement resolution 1405 (2002), regarding deploying a fact-finding team to investigate the events in the Jenin refugee camp. In addition to its rejection of all resolutions, it was also unbelievable to see an occupying Power commit war crimes in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and then to refuse to allow a fact-finding team of eminent persons designated by the Secretary-General to investigate those acts. What Israel did was not in itself unbelievable, as it has behaved in the same manner time and again. What was truly incredible was the fact that the Council was unable to make any serious effort to counter that challenge to its mandate and to international law. Moreover, Israel has also failed to implement resolution 1403 (2002), which calls for the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) without delay.

Despite the progress made, one major problem remains. The Council has not been able to follow-up on or enforce its resolutions when it comes to Israel. Since the beginning of Israeli occupation, in 1967, the Council has adopted 37 resolutions concerning the situation in the occupied territories and the practices of Israel, the occupying Power. Twenty-seven of those resolutions affirmed the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the need for the occupying Power to abide by the Convention. Those resolutions have dealt with many subjects, including those of displaced Palestinians, Jerusalem, settlements, deportation and the protection of Palestinian civilians. Committees were established, envoys were sent and reports were requested from the Secretary-General. None of that produced any results whatever. Israel has not abided by any of these resolutions and has, in fact, publicly rejected most of them. To date, Israel has not ceased in its violation of the spirit and letter of those resolutions.

The Council has done nothing whatever in response, thereby making the provisions of the Charter, including Article 25, a tragic farce, and signalling dangerous consequences for the international order. I believe the Council must end all this. It must ensure the implementation of its resolutions in all instances and without exceptions.

Organization of work

The Acting President: Tomorrow, 16 October, the General Assembly will consider in the morning the report of the General Committee on action taken at this morning's meeting as the first item. At tomorrow morning's meeting, the Assembly will also consider as the third item a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/57/468, regarding agenda item 41 (a), entitled "Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in 1990s", in order to take action on a draft decision recommended in paragraph 18 of that notice. We shall continue the debate on the report of the Security Council tomorrow morning as the fourth item.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.